Labour Monthly

EDITED BY R. PALME DUTT

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

BY D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

JUNE 1940 SIXPENCE

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LABOUR MONTHLY

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To Our Readers

Last month we wrote that the spreading of the war to Scandinavia had created fresh difficulties for us, as for all journals. Since then so much has happened that those questions of paper supply, though they still exist, now seem ancient history. A new situation has brought new Defence Regulations, and the firm which has printed the LABOUR MONTHLY *for ten years was apprehensive of action being taken against them as printers under these regulations. They therefore refused without notice to print this number, and we had to find another at the last moment. This is an example of the effect of these regulations in putting difficulties in the way of the free expression of opinion.*

In spite of this we are determined to carry on. We believe that it is essential in these days that the analysis of the situation for which the magazine is known should be put before the increasing number of readers. But we are involved in extra expense. The margin between costs and receipts of which we spoke last month is now greater. Below we acknowledge with thanks a number of donations, but we need at least £30 *this month in order to prevent debt piling up. We appeal to all our readers to help us to reach this sum.*

May we also remind readers that we cannot any longer accept returns from newsagents. In order to make sure of your copy of the LABOUR MONTHLY *place a regular order with your newsagent, or, better still, take out a subscription at this office.*

LABOUR MONTHLY DEVELOPMENT FUND

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

The Way of Death and the Way of Life—Either Thus or Thus—In a Sea of Blood—Towards World War—Battle for What?—Winners and Losers—United States' Rôle—Government Crisis—The Great Betrayal—Die-Hard Toryism in Power—Dissillusionment of the Liberal Idealists—The Lie of "National Defence"— Real National Defence—The Labour Party After Forty Years—Marxism and Social Imperialism —The Test of Experience—"War Socialism"— Gladiators of Monopoly Capital—Closing the Ranks—The Way of Life

THE flames of war are spreading fast and far. The entire Old World of capitalist domination is passing into the melting pot. The speed of events outstrips close comment. Last month we wrote of the prospects of the Bournemouth Labour Party Conference:

> The Bournemouth Conference of the Labour Party meets in the midst of a very grave extension of the war—the extension for which the Labour Party leaders clamoured. This extension may have gone considerably further, reaching to new regions even more decisively important than Northern Europe by the time the Bournemouth Conference meets.

The extension of the war to Holland and Belgium and the new Westward thrust had developed three days before the Bournemouth Conference met. Similarly we wrote of the Political Truce, which the Labour Party was officially denying up to the very last moment as impossible and unthinkable ("There is not, never has been, and never will be a Political Truce."—*Labour Press Service,* April 10, 1940):

> Behind the issue of the Political Truce lies the issue of Coalition. The one prepares the other as its final outcome; the margin between the two is in reality a thin one.

The Coalition Government of Churchill, Chamberlain and Attlee was already formed before the Bournemouth Conference had met and was graciously accorded the privilege to sanction the accomplished fact. With this formation of the Grand Coalition of all the parties of capitalism, including the Labour leadership, the last reserves are beginning to be called up. The cards in the pack are growing fewer. A whole epoch is coming to an end. The rattle of bankruptcy sounds through the clangour of the guns. Those who cling for salvation to any of the existing States of imperialism or to

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any of the ruling class groups, desperately searching out reasons to prefer one to another, have not measured the strength of the hurricane which is now let loose and which lays today on the representatives of the new order very different tasks.

GREAT issues go ill with a petty outlook which seeks to chart a cataclysm with the vanished landmarks of a lost stability. Terrible as is the countless sum of human suffering and agony which spreads with the spreading of the war, a deep historical process is taking place through this conflagration which is burning up the frontiers of States and Empires and dynamiting the rocks of old dominations, not for the benefit of new domination, but for the final destruction of all domination of man by man. "*Either thus or thus.*" We Communists strove to the last for the way of less blood, of less suffering for humanity. We knew what imperialism meant, and where its restoration after the last war would lead. We strove for the socialist revolution after the last war when its accomplishment would have been easy over all Europe. We were denounced as bloodthirsty maniacs lusting after civil war and as enemies of peace and order. When the restoration of capitalism brought its inevitable fruits in world economic crisis, the perishing of the democratic pacifist illusions and the advance of fascism and war, we strove still to save the situation by a great common front of the working class and the peoples to stem the tide of reaction and war; we strove for a Peace Front which could have prevented this war. We were denounced as unprincipled devotees of political manoeuvres for our private aims, as hankerers after military combinations, as compromisers deviating from the straight path of pure socialism. The little help that would have been easy to Spain, to Abyssinia, to China, was refused because "it might mean war." When war in consequence inevitably followed, we strove to stop it before it had reached its full scale, while there was still the possibility for the united action of the peoples to hold the hands of the still hesitant imperialists. We were denounced as traitors to the holy war and agents of the enemy imperialism.

NOW they have had their way. The first phase is over. War is here, war without limit. The conflagration will not easily burn itself out, nor will it easily be stayed save by the complete overthrow of the existing rulers. The great change will come in this way also; but it has to come now, no longer through any of the easier ways we sought to make possible, but through an ocean of blood and tears compared with which the experience of 1914-18 was an innocent rehearsal. And the men who have chosen this path, who have consistently blocked every other way out, who have passed this

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sentence of doom on a generation and compelled mankind to tread the path of Golgotha, are the prim, prudent, cautious, self-satisfied pygmies of the Second International, who, after denouncing the Communists for years as the supposed advocates of strife and bloodshed, are now wallowing in a sea of blood and clamouring for more.

WITHIN the shell of the war in Europe, and alongside the still continuing war in the Far East, the outlines of the world war are already opening out. *All imperialism is contending for the new division of the world.* Not only are Italy and Japan drawn in, but the United States is more and more actively participating in its own fashion, even though it delays to the last the moment of military participation. No area of the world is safe. Economic war is inextricably linked with military war. Sea power, air power, blockade, gold, loans, blackmail, intrigue—every weapon is brought into play. In this battle of the imperialist giants there is no law or morality; the small countries are as helpless victims as the peoples. Britain violates Norwegian neutrality and prepares an expeditionary force to " forestall " Germany. Germany gets in first and invades Norway to " forestall " Britain. Britain seizes Iceland to " forestall " Germany. Germany invades Holland and Belgium to " forestall " Britain. The drawing of Holland and Belgium into the war is at once calculated by Britain and France, not in terms of small countries of seventeen million inhabitants, but of vast colonial empires with an area seventy times as great and with seventy-three million inhabitants. The value of Belgium and Holland is calculated in terms of gold, dollar reserves, rubber, tin, copper. Britain immediately seizes the Dutch West Indies. Britain, Japan and the United States watch one another like jackals over the Dutch East Indies.

BATTLE for the Iron Ore of Scandinavia. Battle for the Rubber, Tin and Copper of the Dutch and Belgian colonial empires. Battle for the Oil of the Near and Middle East. Battle for the inheritance of the ramshackle British Empire. So the monopolists scramble and fight for the wealth of the world, while the peoples give their lives for the gambles of their masters under the whip of fear on both sides for their national existence at stake. And the " innocent " Blum asks how this can be regarded as an " imperialist " war, so far as Britain and France are concerned. For him no doubt Britain and France are " little nations " totalling eighty-five millions, and not the two largest Empires in the world, with over five hundred million colonial slaves. But whatever may be handed out for popular propaganda, the imperialists do not forget in their own calculations. The immediate calculations of every City

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Editor on the significance of the drawing of Belgium and Holland into the war were as direct as a business account:

> Most valuable of all are the products of the Dutch and Belgian Empires. These include copper, tin, rubber, oil-seeds and a host of other essential commodities besides. . . . In rubber, including the Netherlands East Indies, we now have almost a world monopoly, while in tin we equally have a monopoly of the most valuable kind.
>
> (City Editor, *Sunday Times*, May 12, 1940.)

THE Norwegian people may suffer, and find themselves fighting alone after a " brilliant " withdrawal of the Allied forces; but the Norwegian gold and shipping are safe in British hands; to the Norwegian people are left their mountains and their war. The Dutch and Belgian peoples may suffer; but the Dutch and Belgian gold and shipping and colonial wealth are safe under British control, with Wilhelmina in London to represent the title-deeds. The Dutch and Belgian small investors may see ruin; but the world monopolist trusts ride the storm and laugh at frontiers:

> In the short run many Dutch and Belgian holders of securities may feel forced to realise to meet their losses. In the long run, the assets and activities of such companies as Royal Dutch and Shell are largely immune from events in Holland. Up to a point the same is true of the Unilever interests, certainly of the British branch, while even the Dutch branch is not wholly dependent upon Holland. Losses no doubt may be incurred, but earning power should remain. (*ibid.*)

The world monopolist trusts remain " immune," while the peoples give their lives, as they believe, for their countries. Such is the cruel tangle of imperialist war, which Lenin long ago disentangled and showed the only solution.

WITH the question of the Dutch East Indies the world character of the conflict comes openly into the forefront. The United States begins to intervene more and more openly in the fight, with all methods short of military participation, which is reserved for the last stage only after the European combatants are exhausted. The sensationalist press in America begins to speculate on the demise of the British Empire and on the future American inheritance. Under the title " Heirs of the British Empire " appears the following American comment:

> What nations should be the heirs of the British Empire, when and if it finally goes the way of all previous Empires? We might as well do some thinking on that subject now, in case all goes not so well with Britain in the present war.
>
> With the ultimate disposition of British possessions in Asia, Africa and the South Seas, the United States has no proper concern as far as we can see.
>
> But in the Western hemisphere the United States should become the heir of the British Empire south of Canada. We mean we should inherit

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> the British West Indies, Bermuda, Jamaica, the Bahamas, British holdings in the Leeward and Windward Islands, etc.—plus British Honduras in Central America, British Guiana in South America and the Falkland Islands off lower Argentina. . . . .
>
> Regarding Canada in the event of the British Empire's dissolution, we do not think there ought to be any United States attempt to annex it. It may be that the Canadians will want to come into the Union of their own accord. If so, we ought to negotiate to admit them on terms of full equality with the present 48 States.
>
> (New York *Sunday News*, April 17, 1940.)

The vultures are gathered over the carcase. The real character of the total conflict of imperialism for the redivision of the entire earth looms ever more inescapably through the fog of "fascism" and "anti-fascism" spread by the liberal illusionists who live in the past and not in the present and only act as servants of imperialism.

IT is against this background of the real character of the deepening conflict of the world monopolists for the new division of the earth, using peoples and nations as pawns in the bloody battle of the Stock Exchanges, that the problems of the present political situation, of the governmental crisis and of the policy of the labour movement take on their urgent significance. The bankruptcy of the Chamberlain Government was not the bankruptcy merely of a group within the ruling class. It was the first outward expression and explosion of the bankruptcy of the entire war policy of the ruling class; of its war policy pursued over these eight years, the encouragement of aggression and fascism, the refusal of the peace front, the launching of the war, the refusal of peace proposals, and the reckless measures to extend the war, which have led to disaster after disaster for the people through all these years. And it is a measure of this bankruptcy that no alternative could be found save to plunge deeper into the morass of the same war policy, and to replace the bungler Chamberlain by the gambler Churchill. The formation of this Government can itself only be a stage in the further deepening of the crisis. The outcome of its formation can only be to lead to yet greater disasters for the people, to new crises and new desperation, as the shades of death darken over Europe.

THE greatest crime of the war-frenzied leadership of the Labour Movement is that in this hour of deadliest crisis of the whole capitalist system, in this hour of deepening exposure and bankruptcy of the whole ruling class, in this hour of historic opportunity and responsibility and crying need for the independent fight of socialism to take the lead, to awaken the people to their peril, to batter down the weakening and dying system of class rule and save the world, they have chosen instead to ally themselves with dying

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imperialism, to hasten to its rescue, to become the figureheads of its discredited government, and so to sully the name of Labour with shame and seek to involve the Labour Movement in the common downfall. This is the heart of the present betrayal, against which all that is living in the Labour Movement must now fight. The only path to victory of the working class lies in taking advantage of every division and crisis of the capitalist rulers. They have chosen the other path and become the main gladiators of dying capitalism.

THE new Coalition Government of Churchill-Chamberlain-Attlee is a Government of full and unlimited imperialist war. Its protagonists are those who openly proclaim that the war is war on the German people and that the only war aim is Victory. Churchill at the head of the Government; Lloyd for the Colonies: Amery for India; Duff Cooper for Information; Anderson for Home Security—these names are a programme. Never has Die-Hard Tory Imperialism won such powerful strategic position—thanks to Labour's support. Its characteristic first acts have been the bombing raids in Germany, calculated to provoke reprisals; the arming of the police in Britain; and the new dictatorial Emergency Powers measures. The placing of Duff Cooper at the head of Propaganda is a proclamation to the German people. Duff Cooper's appointment follows on his speech of April 23 in which he declared that the war was not against a Government or a régime, but against the German people: " these were the crimes of a whole people . . . it was wishful thinking and dangerous thinking to believe that we could drive a wedge between the German Government and the German people."

OF this basic line of policy of imperialist war, expressed also in Sir John Reith's speech at the same time, the unhappy Brailsford had to declare:

> So perishes, by a decision of the Cabinet, the illusion that we were fighting for a reconciled and co-operative Europe.
> (H. N. Brailsford, " Fight for Freedom?" *Reynolds News*, May 5, 1940)

The awakening comes too late. So, too, of Lord Lloyd, the author of the official pamphlet, " The British Case," Robert Dell, another liberal illusionist, wrote in tearful complaint:

> Now, however, a still worse blow at the Allied cause has been struck by the publication in America of Lord Lloyd's Fascist and clericalist manifesto, " The British Case," with an introduction by Lord Halifax. Lord Lloyd's position is substantially that of Father Coughlin and the " Christian Front." . . . Nobody believes that the British Foreign Secretary could have given his approval and imprimatur to this astonishing document without the consent of the Cabinet or at least of the Prime Minister, and it is accepted here as an official statement of the British

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> case. It has thrown the friends of England in America into consternation. . . . It plays into the hands of every enemy of the Allies in the United States. *The British case, as set forth by Lord Lloyd with the approval of the British Foreign Secretary, is exactly what the Communists have declared it to be. We have been refuting the Communist arguments, and Lord Halifax and Lord Lloyd have stabbed us in the back.*
>
> (Robert Dell, *New Statesman and Nation*, May 4, 1940.)

This prize liberal illusionist does not attack himself for having been wrong about the policy of British imperialism and praise the Communists for having been by his own admission proved right. Instead he attacks the British imperialists for having by their policy let him down ("stabbed him in the back") in his controversy with the Communists, and considers he has a grievance. However, the disillusionment of the liberal idealists is the familiar story of every imperialist war.

INTO such a Government the Labour Party leaders have chosen to enter. In the name of socialism they refused to unite with the opponents of Chamberlain in order to prevent the present war. But their "socialism" does not hold them back from uniting with Chamberlain, Churchill, Lloyd, Amery, Duff Cooper and Beaverbrook (any more than it holds back Blum from uniting with the Fascist Ybarnegaray) for the purpose of prosecuting imperialist war. They endeavour to cover up their betrayal with the plea of "national defence." The plea is a deception. In imperialist war there is no national defence, but only mutual extermination of the workers for the profit of the slaveowners. Brailsford (the same Brailsford who wrote "Fight for Freedom?" with a query a fortnight earlier) declares:

> It is a confusion of thought to call this an imperialist war. . . . The State is not Empire; it is all that generations of workers struggled to win, from Wat Tyler to Keir Hardie. All they gained for us would perish if we had to endure the fate that has befallen the Dutch.
>
> (Brailsford in *Reynolds News*, May 19th, 1940.)

The sophistry will not wash. Churchill, Chamberlain, Halifax and Lloyd are not fighting for the aims of Wat Tyler and Keir Hardie; and it is their will, their class, that determines the aims. This is the identical sophistry of Social Democracy in the war of 1914, shamelessly brought out as if it were a new one. So German Social Democracy told the German workers that they must fight for the Kaiser, because all that Social Democracy had won in years of struggle against German Imperialism was embodied in the German State and bound up with its survival. Thereby they issued their historic denial of the foundation stone of Marxism: "You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have the world to win."

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FIVE years ago we wrote in these Notes:

> In the uncertain state of the international situation, the possibility is not excluded of a Nazi surprise attack to the West, contrary to the calculations of the dominant imperialist Powers. The possibility, though not the most likely, though not the main line of the war danger, exists, and could raise a sharp question directly for the French workers, and possibly also for the workers in Britain. Must we then let the Nazis "walk over us," demand the trade union leaders with great heat. Must we not "defend our country" against fascism? Is not pacifism in such conditions equivalent to surrender to fascism? The revolutionary answer is clear. We hold nothing in common with the pacifist position. We do not for a moment exclude military defence against fascism—on one condition, and one condition only, namely, that we have a country to defend. We shall defend Workers' Britain, as an integral part of the World Workers' Republic, of the future World Soviet Union, against fascism with every means in our power. Let the exploiting class in France make way and surrender power to the workers' united front, and the French workers will defend Workers' France against every attack, as they defended the Commune, against the combined French-German ruling class. But until then we shall fight our own exploiting class; we shall not let ourselves be dragged into fighting for one set of masters against another. . . . Such fight of the British workers against British imperialism will more rapidly undermine the shaking Nazi régime in Germany, will hasten the German revolution, than any "union sacrée" of the trade union leaders with British imperialism, which will only strengthen the Nazi hold, confirm the Nazi propaganda of the vanity of working-class internationalism, and prolong the war. This is the Leninist line, which remains the only line for the working class in imperialist war.
>
> (Notes of the Month, LABOUR MONTHLY, January, 1935.)

That was written five years ago. Students of "political somersaults" may study it with advantage. It was not written after the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact.

THE founders of the Labour Party,who believed that they had at last won the British working-class movement to independence from capitalist politics, did not anticipate that the outcome of their labours after forty years would be a Coalition of the Labour Party with Die-Hard Toryism for the purposes of an imperialist war. With this culmination the reformist social imperialist leadership which has dominated the Labour Party for these forty years has completed its evolution. At the end of forty years of effort and sacrifice—forty years which have seen the working class at the other end of Europe, under Bolshevik leadership, advance from the first foundation of its party to the conquest of power and the completed construction of socialism—not a step has been achieved of the advance to socialism in Britain; Monopoly Capital is more firmly entrenched than ever; the official labour movement is more firmly tied to capitalism than even in the late nineteenth century. Why this colossal failure, which constitutes the record of the Labour Party—

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a failure all the more marked in view of the far more advanced rotten-ripe stage of capitalism in Britain, the far more favourable technical conditions for the transition to socialism, and the far greater numbers and actual numerical preponderance of the proletariat in Britain, with long traditions of disciplined struggle and self-sacrifice? The working-class movement will have to search deeply for the answer to this question, on which survival and ultimate victory depends. The answer goes down to the foundations of the movement, and to the basic principles of policy and organisation.

AS Marx and Engels showed long ago in the nineteenth century, and as Lenin showed with renewed force in the twentieth century, it is the cancer of imperialism, of sharing in the colonial monopoly of the ruling class, that has eaten into the vitals of the British Labour Movement and robbed it of the fruits of socialism in return for a sorry pottage and ultimate ruin. The separation of the Labour Party from the capitalist parties was only a formal parliamentary separation; it was not a separation from capitalist politics; it was not yet the advance to the basis of independent class struggle, of socialism, of Marxism; it did not yet represent a political party of the working class, capable of leading the working class struggle to victory over capitalism. Such an advance was essential to the further development of the Labour Party, if it was to fulfil the aims of the socialists within it, the advance, as Lenin termed it, to a Socialist Labour Party based on the principles of proletarian class struggle against capitalism. But such an advance was tenaciously opposed by the social imperialist leadership, who from the outset fought Marxism with a ferocity and bitterness never shown against capitalism. The battle between these two tendencies has been the history of the Labour Party. So far the social imperialist leadership has won, fortified by the entire machinery of the capitalist dictatorship on its side, and with increasingly sharp disciplinary measures in the later stages. But the working-class struggle will find its way forward.

THREE cycles of development have marked these forty years, culminating in three great betrayals. The first was the early formative stage, which culminated in the betrayal of 1914. The Labour Party, though participating in the Second International and signing the Basel resolution, had not yet adopted any basis of socialism; it acted in practice as a wing of the Liberal Party, and in the wake of the Liberal Party went into the war. Thus before any formal basis of socialism had been reached, the social imperialist leadership completed the evolution of Social Democracy abroad. In

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consequence, when the great mass awakening and socialist upsurge at the end of the war compelled the formal adoption of the aim of socialism, there was already a hardened Social Democratic leadership in control to frustrate the development. There followed the second period of the great mass struggles after the war and their continuous betrayal, culminating in the betrayal of the General Strike in 1926 and the collapse of the Second Labour Government with the passing of MacDonald and the other main leaders to coalition with Toryism. With the ensuing period of deepening capitalist crisis, reaction, fascism and the advance to war, the third great opportunity arose to unite and lead the struggle of the people against the advance to fascism and war. This opportunity was also refused in favour of unity with the dominant ruling capitalist camp; and the veiled coalition of those years has now culminated in the present open War Coalition Government in unity with the worst enemies of the working class.

TO cover up this final betrayal (far greater than in 1914, because of the much more advanced stage of development, because of the nominal acceptance of the basis of socialism, and because of the existence already of the first Socialist State) the leadership has sought to produce the theory of "War Socialism"—already long ago evolved and discredited by German Social Democracy in the last war, but now presented by the Laskis and Attlees as a brilliant new inspiration. The ruthless War Dictatorship of Monopoly Capital, robbing and enslaving all sections of the people, is now glorified as a first step on the path to Socialism! The latest Labour Party pamphlet (following on its gutter press pamphlet of forgeries and abuse against the Socialist State), entitled "The War and After: Labour's Home Policy," declares:

> In order to win the War, we must use to the full the resources of the nation, and this cannot be done without public direction and control. Already the Government has been compelled to bring some degree of order into the chaos of capitalism. . . . If the War is to be won with the least suffering and hardship, Socialist principles must be applied. (p. 4.)
>
> Thus during the present struggle the form of the new order will be emerging from the old. (p. 5.)
>
> War never leaves a nation where it found it; and it can never be justified save as it elevates the conscience of a nation to new and nobler purposes. . . . We may yet use this War to lay the foundations of a juster and more generous life. (p. 11.)

Similarly Laski was put up to evoke the gulled applause of the Bournemouth Conference with such declarations as

> The larger the scale of Socialism in detail and principle by which this War is organised, the more successful and rapid will be the possibility of victory.
>
> The grim months of War should be used to go forward with Social Democracy.

The prostitution of Socialism could not sink lower.

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THE real rôle of the Labour Ministers in the Government is soon laid bare by hard facts. They are not only placed there as figureheads for the discredited capitalist régime. They are not only taken on in order to whip up feeling for the war. They are entrusted with the most definite tasks to put through the offensive against the working class. Bevin at the head of the Ministry of Labour, and Morrison at the head of the Ministry of Supply, have the tasks of enforcing the requirements of the economic dictatorship of Monopoly Capital against the standards of the workers. All the previous approaches and negotiations had still only achieved partial successes; the trade union leadership feared to commit themselves and drew back at the last moment from documents they had provisionally signed; the Keynes Plan remained suspended in the air. But now, as Bevin's first speeches have shown, the offensive is about to be let loose with a violence never approached in the last war. With this offensive goes equally the attack on democratic rights, prepared in the new Emergency Powers. Here is the real Fifth Column attack against working class and democratic rights and standards; and, for the better deception of the people, the Labour Ministers are placed at the head of the attack.

THE workers will now need to close their ranks for a period of grim and tenacious struggle. There are no magic solutions. The Bournemouth Conference, swept with war hysteria, has opened the gates to the enemies of the working class. The trade unions are about to encounter the same dangers as those of France. In the name of the fight against fascism, the advance towards fascism is pressed forward. As the violence of the war deepens, every attempt will be made to exploit the anger and bewilderment of the masses in order to stoke the fires of reaction. By these desperate expedients the ruling régime only prepares the way for its own downfall. The era of liberal deception, of lingering stability, is ending also for the Western world. The lines of the class struggle stand out sharp and clear. As the frenzied shouts for "victory" of the contending ruling classes only plunge the world deeper in chaos and barbarism, the conditions are gathering for the awakening of the people to the only way out.

BUT the advance to the new stage, the advance to the offensive of the workers, which can alone bring a solution, requires first stubborn and patient work of preparation, of dogged defensive struggle, of marshalling the forces disorganised from above, and of spreading of political enlightenment. Every individual socialist and trade unionist can today play a rôle equivalent in political significance to that of hundreds tomorrow. The struggle goes forward in

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the workshops and the mines, in every union branch and in the back streets of the towns. It is necessary to build up and strengthen the local united front of the working class against all attempts at disruption. It is necessary to build up the broad democratic movement in defence of democratic rights and for the protection of the interests of the people against the exactions of the big capitalists. It is necessary in the face of the thickening network of regulations, to carry forward ever intensified propaganda of political awakening, on the character of the war, the rôle of the Government and the aim of socialism. It is necessary to build up and strengthen the political party of the working class which can alone lead the struggle, the Communist Party, our section of the world Communist movement. We can go forward with the greater confidence because our forces are already a hundred times stronger than at this stage in the last war, both in this country and still more on a world scale. Never have we had such right to feel confident as in the midst of the present storms. The way of death, of the night of capitalist barbarism and anarchy and of betrayal of the labour movement, may be triumphing for the moment. But the way of life, of international working-class solidarity and of the victory of the working class and of human brotherhood, will the more certainly triumph in the end.

R.P.D.

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Where Are We Now?

BY D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

THE ENTRY of the Labour Party into the Government of Churchill, Chamberlain, Halifax, Simon, Kingsley Wood, Lord Lloyd, Duff-Cooper and Amery, with its carefully-managed reception at the Bournemouth Conference, constitutes so formidable a departure from Socialism, and makes so wide a divergence between the present leadership and the attitude and outlook of an immense and growing section of the rank and file of the working class, that it is at once an almost fatal blow and an encouragement to those who seek Peace and Socialism. The blow is almost fatal because it kills so much of the movement; there is nevertheless encouragement, because such a policy is too bad to carry much of the movement for long, and the great mass must soon react and return to active militant Socialism, throwing off some of its present leaders, converting others, and bringing up new ones from the ranks.

The immediate effects are nevertheless grave in the extreme. The Labour Party as at present constituted has abandoned the task of winning Socialism and become a mere appendage of our Capitalist rulers during the most tragic period of modern history. The struggle to build the Socialist State is postponed until after the war, and if it be not then too late to resume it the capitalist forces, more desperate and more unscrupulous than ever, will have most of the weapons in their own hands, and some of our leaders will be their hostages, sharing the responsibility for everything that will have been done meanwhile in the name of Britain to the workers of Britain. Under such conditions are we condemned in advance by our leaders to face the efforts of the rulers of Britain and France (and perhaps of Germany) to maintain or re-erect a capitalist structure—bound to be essentially Fascist—in the three main countries involved and any more that may meanwhile be dragged in.

To all this, and more, our present leaders, many of them sincere, have committed us. They surely have some reasons for such conduct. Let us consider what defence they made to the Conference.

Most of the speeches from the platform were in the best Tory tradition. They must have offended deeply not merely the pacifist elements, not merely the body of educated Socialists who oppose the war because they believe that it is an Imperialist war in which the victory of the British capitalists would be no better for the working classes than their defeat, but also those who support the war and want it to be "won," but at the same time seek to keep up some part at any rate of the fight for wages and conditions, for pensions and allowances—a fight in which the bosses are certainly not laying down their weapons. Indeed, nobody can have been really pleased except the ghost of the late Mr. Horatio Bottomley, who was so aptly recalled by an interrupter of one of the more sadistic passages to which a half-bewildered, half-stampeded Conference was treated. Our "fight to a finishers" seemed actually to enjoy the melancholy conclusion that there was nothing for it but slaughter, slaughter and more slaughter.

But of course some of the speeches attempted to provide defences and arguments that were more than the mere shouting of terrified jingoes. We were told once more all the stock stories about rallying behind the country

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in danger. They all sound so convincing—on certain conditions. Eliminate the whole of your Socialist history and education, the memories of the almost identical procedure in the last war, and of the cry of "Never again!" so often repeated since, and abandoned when "again" arrives. If your mind goes so far, and no further, you can then swallow the case, wondering only why all these "overwhelming" arguments did not carry your leaders into the Government last September instead of this May.

Many moderate delegates whose loyalty would have carried them a long way were stunned to learn that their leaders had not merely joined the Government, but had actually agreed to sit side by side (in a minority) in a War Cabinet with Chamberlain, to say nothing of the minor but significant reactionaries outside that War Cabinet. Few were deceived by the talk of "full partnership" and "no hostages," for it was impossible not to realise that the central and impregnable position which the leaders have taken up corresponds exactly with that occupied by the young lady of Riga after she had been taken for a ride. The question sprang at once to their lips: if the leaders were strong enough to make terms, why did they not insist on excluding Chamberlain, Simon and others? If they were not, their surrender was complete before the first interior tussle could begin.

In a government of this composition, what is the value of the minor excuses that our leaders will get better treatment for soldiers, dependants and workers? The old Tory policy will prevail; to give just enough to stave off revolt, and the presence of "Labour" in the government will be used to persuade the people that the sacrifices demanded of them are necessary, and are approved as such by their own leaders. They will be asked to raise no questions "whilst the house is burning," and every effort will be made to let them forget that the fire brigade has most of the incendiaries still in its ranks.

There are of course other disquieting features. The militant workers in the industrial and political fields are largely crippled. The elements who are at present in control of the Labour Movement seem to me to be welcoming the repression of the Left, both in Britain and in France, without even the slightest perception that such a welcome will make it ten times easier for our rulers, when the main body of Labour shows enough fight to make it worth while, to repress that too. It is a tragic illustration of the sheep in the slaughter-house actually welcoming the fall of the axe on those higher up the file.

It is important, too, to realise the effect of this capitulation to capitalist jingoism on the position of the German working class.

There was at odd moments in the Conference some realisation that the power of Nazism can only be ended by the German working class; but how can we expect that the German working class will throw over their leaders in the middle of a war unless they can hope for some government in this country which they can trust to understand, to sympathise, to help? And what do our leaders offer them? One mouth-general informed them in thundering tones that it was their duty to sabotage, to mutiny, to turn on their leaders, whilst he was preaching that we on our side must support our capitalists in a fight to the finish against Germany. Could anything be better calculated to assist Goebbels in rallying behind the Nazi machine the great mass of German workers, all those indeed who are not sufficiently class-conscious to see where their interests and their duties lead them, even whilst our leaders in Britain are doing their best to cloud our vision of our interests and duties?

The leaders at Bournemouth, but not the rank and file, failed to take account of the strength of the anti-war feeling in the country. I recalled almost with amazement that only a week before I had been honoured to

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address the Labour Party May Day meeting of over 3,000 workers in Glasgow, whose response to a simple message of the brotherhood of all workers and of the necessity of establishing socialist power in all countries so as to bring the war to an end and establish a Socialist peace was so overwhelming, so enthusiastic, so unanimous, that the Capitalist Press did not report a line of my speech.

At a Labour Party Conference it should be impossible to forget for one moment the international character of the Socialist movement; but in the atmosphere which actually prevailed it seemed natural enough that it was largely ignored. Whilst India was being handed over to Mr. Amery, and the Colonies to Lord Lloyd, the Conference sent a telegram of good wishes to the Labour Parties of the Dominions and Colonies, but no message was sent to India, or to any non-British country except the U.S.A.

What, in substance, have our leaders done? They have not merely abandoned Socialism for the duration of the war—for no-one can surely take seriously the polished unreality of Professor Laski's promises of working for Socialism whilst continuing the war—but they have made any struggle for Socialism within their ranks even after the war almost impossible by committing the Party to full support of monopoly capitalism, the Churchills and Chamberlains, the Stamps and Duncans, the Cravens and Wooltons, all the field marshals of modern industrial warfare. The name of Socialism is preserved in Laskian phrases and applied to state capitalism, but the reality they join in destroying.

But, as I have said, Socialists do not need to despair. There may have been no lead given against the ruling class, the warmongers, the profiteers. There may have been floods of the purest jingo nationalism, a temporary triumph of hysteria. But all the " management " of the Conference by its little group of Civil Servants, aided by the effect of the expulsion of thousands of militant Socialists up and down the country, could not stifle points of view more healthy, more Socialist, less remote from the trend of opinion in the working class in general, which found expression in a number of good speeches; and the extremely mixed reception accorded to Léon Blum was very significant. It was remarkable too, that a resolution against the U.S.S.R. being brought into the war was so obviously commanding the general approval of the Conference that the gerry-manderers had to short-circuit it by a vote of " previous question."

These and many other indications confirmed the view that the present leaders are more out of touch than ever before with the great mass of the rank and file; their desertion of Socialism is indeed more complete and more flagrant than that of the unhappy band of deserters in 1931. The cleavage of which these disasters are symptoms is so deep and fundamental that it must soon produce a revulsion of feeling and a change of heart; and we shall see a new, a transformed party leading the battle for Socialism and Peace. Plus je vois les chefs, plus j'aime la foule.

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The Fate of the Labour Party

BY R. PAGE ARNOT

THE CRISIS OF capitalism is racing to a climax. States are crashing; and nation after nation is hurled into the furnace. More than half of mankind is thrown into war. All over the world the productive forces are turned into engines of destruction. Peasants torn from their fields, dislocation of the normal life of working men and women, lowered consumption driving to shortage that ends in malnutrition and disease and finally in famine and pestilence, exhausting toil for the masses, curtailment of rights and living standards, devastation, ruin, Europe a slaughterhouse—this is capitalism in 1940, this is the outcome of the capitalist ruling class. Foreseen by an earlier generation of Socialists, who urged the workers to seize the opportunity to rouse the masses to hasten the downfall of capitalist domination, telling them that only the power of the working class can save mankind from war after war in hideous succession, the crisis hour of capitalism visibly approaches. At this moment the Labour Party crosses into the Government of capitalism, telling the workers to throw up the sponge.

Centuries of class struggle, a hundred years of Socialism, the birth and growth of the Labour movement, its schooling in hard experience and preparedness for final struggles; the organisation of the international working class, country by country, the clear indication by the Socialist International of the path to be followed, the prediction of the wars between imperialist powers, the duty of the working class in case of such war to oppose their governments "to intervene to bring the war promptly to an end," to use the crisis "to hasten the downfall"—did it not all end in 1914 in the collapse of the Second International? And is it to happen once more in the same way? The guarantee of this Second Slaughterhouse, as of the agony of Spain and China, was offered to future history when the heroes of the Second International abandoned socialism for chauvinism, dropped the struggle and supported or entered their capitalist governments. For had even a few of the great socialist and labour parties (and not only the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party) remained true to socialism, Europe today would be a socialist Europe with war banished from within its borders. Is all the past of the international working class, are all the lessons of 1914-1918, of the twenty-five years of general crisis to end only in this in Britain that the Labour Party enters a government of capitalism and gives once more a guarantee of future wars?

To this question, bound to arise in every section of the working class, they are ready with an answer—the Executive Committee of the Labour Party has had it under preparation for some time. They claim that they remain socialists, that they are out for full "socialism after the war," nay, that steps taken during the war in order to wage the war are steps towards socialism. This claim, welcomed enthusiastically by the majority of delegates at Bournemouth Labour Party Conference, requires to be examined. But before this, let us note that another argument, of a familiar kind, was also given to justify the

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entry into the coalition. No need to spend time on this argument, which is put so clearly in the fable of the Sheepdogs Who Joined the Wolves:

> *". . . then they explained to the flock that the old way of barking at the wolves and even making a feint of biting was out-of-date. For another pack of wolves that was wont to prey on a flock of their brethren had suddenly attacked their own wolves. Said one old watch-dog, who slavered over-much, 'After all, they are our* OWN *wolves; and you should be proud that we watch-dogs are asked to join them. It is to defend the old Wolf-and-Sheep Economy. We shall make good wolves. Some of us have even been congratulated on our wolfish looks. But of course we shall not give ourselves airs. We shall be called plain dogs, as before. And you can depend upon us to use our influence with the wolves on your behalf instead of useless barking.'"*

The claim that they are going to get Socialism out of the War laying the foundations during the War and as part of the waging of the War, what does it amount to? It is said by Professor Laski in his speech on May 14 at Bournemouth:

> "The larger the sector of Socialism in detail and principle by which the war effort was organised, the more successful and more rapid would be the possibility of victory."

In the Programme adopted, called "*Labour's Home Policy*," it is stated:

> "To win the war, we must use to the full the resources of the nation, and this cannot be done without public direction and control. Already the Government has been compelled to bring some degree of order into the chaos of capitalism. Knowing that the methods of private enterprise cannot bring victory, it has been forced, over an extending field of industry, to direct what goods shall be produced and what services rendered. It has had to introduce controls of various kinds. It has intervened with subsidies to stabilise the prices of some essential food stuffs. It has undertaken the bulk purchase of food imports and raw materials. The Admiralty has been made responsible for both naval and mercantile ship building. Sea transport is under close control. The railways have been partially unified. The supreme interests of a nation at War compel the adoption of planning measures by a Government which, by natural inclination, repudiates planning."

A week later the *Daily Herald* was claiming (21/5/40) that "already there is evidence in plenty of concessions by the new Government to the viewpoint of its Labour members." And it goes on to cite the appointment of "a small workmanlike War Cabinet" as one piece of evidence, the decision for public control "over a large number of private firms engaged in war work" as another.

Now the remarkable thing from the point of view of these novel claims is that practically all the measures quoted above were adopted during the last War. The difference is not in the measures. The difference therefore appears to be that last time it was Mr. Lloyd George, speaking as Minister of Munitions to the Bristol Trades Union Congress, who narrated what war measures were being taken, and claimed them as an advance towards Socialism, while this time it is the chiefs of the Labour Party who are recommending the measures to the Labour Party Conference and claiming them to be an advance towards Socialism.*

Were they then and are they now really examples of Socialism? Is the control by the war machine of industry and trade and transport and communications, the engulfing of the whole economy of Britain into the whirl-

*It was also Mr. Lloyd George who anticipated something of the bright prospects now being held out by the Labour Party for "after the War" when he spoke of creating "a land fit for heroes to live in"; and anticipated even another side of the Labour Party's programme when he referred to "the wild and poisonous berries of Karl Marxism."

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pool of totalitarian warfare, the increasing grip of the swollen trusts (Millionaire Beaverbrook's first act in the new Ministry of the new Government is to read the banns of the Nuffield-Vickers marriage) and the regimentation of enterprises, especially the small firms—is this to be understood as an instalment of Socialism? If so, then Socialism existed in Germany during the last War under the Kaiser. For Walter Rathenau, leading millionaire capitalist of Germany, put in charge of German war economy, elaborated the plan of State Monopoly Capitalism in terms which correspond largely to what the Labour Party calls now the principle of Socialism. Indeed, the German Social Democrats hailed it then as *Kriegssozialismus* (War-Socialism); the foundations, they held, were being laid of a socialist society. Was it an instalment of Socialism? Did it result, in Germany, in "socialism after the war"?

Clearly neither then nor now can these things be considered as socialism or as leading to socialism.

The war of the imperialist powers, with its continuation of capitalist rule and capitalist policy, rooted in the very nature of capitalism, hastens the development of capitalism towards monopoly and towards State monopoly capitalism. Powerful tendencies, arising from the nature of the capitalist mode of production itself, are driving forward to the goal. The claims of the Labour Party applied to this process amount to nothing more than the demand that it shall be conscious and shall be called "socialism."

> ". . . Instead of regarding each item of State control as a temporary infringement of the normal, the occasion should be seized to lay the foundations of an efficient economic system. Thus, the railways, the coal industry, and a substantial part of arms production should be made national services during the war. . . . Thus, during the present struggle, the form of the new order will be emerging from the old. The main outlines of the new order are clear."

Socialism is something very different. Socialism means, and has always meant, the working class thrusting out the capitalists, winning power and on the basis of their power and social ownership, constructing society without classes. Socialism means the working class taking over the means of production, land, mines, factories. Socialism means the ending of capitalist class rule—that there will be no more capitalists, no more exploitation of man by man.

To win Socialism the working class have to carry out their struggle to the point where they can hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule according to the old decisions of the Socialist International. This is the path followed by the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. There is, and can be, no other path.

But if the claims to be carrying out socialism prove to be unfounded, what is it then that has happened in these Bournemouth decisions?

It means that the Labour Party, formed to secure independent working-class representation, is now to save capitalism from the independent action of the working class. It has become part and parcel of the Government of capitalism as the final stage of its own development from the days when it pointed to trusts and public utilities like the London Transport Board as instruments of Socialism and when it was demonstrating its capacity to be "the alternative government" of capitalism by upholding continuity on foreign affairs, colonies, defence and all other essentials of Imperialist policy. As the crisis of capitalism deepens, there can be further reconstructions and reshufflings; there can be a majority of Labour ministers; there can be even the last expression of capitalist trust in "the Labour men," the formation of an all-Labour Cabinet to be the "saviours" of capitalist society; but the essence is already here, and subsequent changes would only be surface shiftings. Meantime the workers can be told that Labour is "emancipated" by the "repre-

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sentation of Labour," not only in this or that war committee, but in the very Executive Committee of the capitalist class.

The totalitarian framework of British politics, whose signs were pointed out in the December LABOUR MONTHLY, has reached a further stage The medley of party labels within the new National Government has now no more significance than the first motley of 1931 (National Labour*, National Liberal, Conservative). The reality is the single, all-embracing Government of capitalism with what in practice is bound to act as the Government's single totalitarian party. Nevertheless, within the Government party each section has its particular function. The function of the Labour detachment is to safeguard "the rear," to keep the workers quiet. It was not for the beautiful eyes of Bevin and Alexander, Attlee and Greenwood that they were brought into the Government. The Labour Party must deliver the goods. It is there, not for Socialism, *but to prevent the developing and sharpening of the class struggle.*

The function of the Labour Party (or Labour detachment of the Government Party) in stilling the class-struggle requires something much more than a repetition of their behaviour in the first Imperialist World War. Then they could simply join in the chorus of propaganda, parroting the Asquiths and Lloyd Georges and Churchills with suitable variations. When Mr. Bernard Shaw in 1914 put forth "socialist" arguments for supporting the war, he was denounced by fellow-members of the Labour Party for having broken the political truce; he had introduced a jarring note into the sweet harmony of Lib-Lab-Tory jingoism. His "socialist" pro-war arguments then were still music of the future in Britain. Only in the last year of the war did the Labour Party proclaim its adoption of Socialism in its 1918 programme "Labour and the New Social Order." Since then a whole generation of the Labour Party has grown up in the belief that its object is Socialism. To keep the working class in the fold is therefore no longer possible by mere repetition of jingo slogans.

When in the first months of the war the absence of the word "socialism" from Labour Party pronouncements brought disquiet and protests in the ranks (to be met by the Labour civil service or Inquisition in a series of reproofs, purges, and expulsions), the ex-"Lefts" were quick to point the moral. The lesson has now been learned. To do its job well for the capitalists, *the Labour Party leaders must boldly proclaim the antithesis of socialism to be socialism.* They have to assert that the war controls already mentioned, together with the "Frenchifying" of workshop conditions and hours and customs, the driving down of the standard of living of the whole people, the restrictions on civil liberties—in a word, *state monopoly capitalism*—is itself to be described as socialist.†

What is this Labour Party? What has it been? Taken over the period of forty years its doctrine can be summed up as capital's Liberal-Socialism. For Liberalism, defeated inside the working-class movement, came back as Liberal-Socialism. From the primitive stage of Lib-Labourism of the years

*The fusion principle is illustrated by Sir William Jowitt who held the Attorney-Generalship in the first National Government from the National Labour Party and who has at last retained his foothold, on a lower rung of the ladder, this time as a trusted member once more of the Labour Party.

†The *Times*, stumbling slightly on the day after the Bournemouth conference had explained these new tactics, snarled a little at the pretensions of the new partner in the coalition, saying that if war controls meant socialism, so by the same logic should war-time restrictions of liberty. But the next day, better instructed, it winked heavily and haled up Sir George Shuster's remarks in order to show (if that was now the game) that the *Times* could shout "public service instead of private profit" as loud as any Labour man.

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before 1914, through the Fabian Programmes from 1918 onwards, to the stage of Mondism in the Trade Union Congress and MacDonaldism in the Labour Party, Liberal-Socialism has always sought to adapt itself to monopoly capitalism. That adaptation went step by step to the National Labour of MacDonald, and this last stage of adaptation leads to what would be well understood if it were called "National Socialism."

In Germany, also, there is State Monopoly Capitalism and the further development of the terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary section of finance-capital—called, by Hitler, "National Socialism." There is a single Governmental Party; suppression of working-class organisations; suppression of subject nationalities and minorities; furious campaigns against Marxism, Communism, the Communist International, the Soviet Union; preparation for Totalitarian warfare of the whole population. Here step after step is being taken towards the same conditions.

But, above all, in Germany there is the Labour Front, the organisation specifically designed to keep the workers quiet. In Britain there are the Trade Unions; and it might seem that this remained the cardinal distinction between the two countries. But for many years, and especially since the last war, the process of weaving the Trade Unions in the machinery of Government has gone steadily forward. The Trade Unions of Britain have been transformed in a quarter of a century, and in industry after industry they have shown themselves more capable of preventing strikes than of organising them.

The gradual interweaving of the Trade Unions with the capitalist State has smoothed the way, both for the adaptations of Liberal Socialism and also for their own participation in a single front with employers and State. Now the stage is reached where Mr. Bevin requests the Shop Stewards to regard themselves as part of the Government. How many further steps have to be taken before the distinction from the Labour Front disappears?

At the beginning of the century there came into existence the British Labour Party and the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. They followed different paths. In the names of their leaders the whole difference between them is summed up—MacDonaldism and Leninism. The one, adopting Liberal-Socialism, drew its inspiration from foreign sources, alien to the traditions of the British working class. The Party of a new type built by Lenin was closer to the traditions of the Chartists, of successive generations of fighters in Britain; and in building up in this country a Party of a new type the British working class will be returning to the fighting traditions and finding therein a guarantee of victory.

D. N. PRITT

has written a brilliant exposure of Federal Union, an analysis of its proposals and implications, with a chapter on the League and its failure, another on Anglo-French governmental collaboration and a section on Federal Union as a smoke-screen. **2/6**

FEDERAL ILLUSION?

FREDERICK MULLER

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The "Socialism" of the Second International

BY H. A. GEORGE

WHEN ASKED BY the Independent Labour Party in 1920 "In what respect does Communism differ from other forms of Socialism?", the Communist International replied in a famous document "there are no other forms. There is only Communism Whatever else goes under the name of Socialism is either wilful deception by the lackeys of the bourgeoisie or the self-delusion of persons or groups who hesitate to choose between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; who hesitate between a life and death struggle and the role of assistants to the expiring bourgeoisie." That statement may well serve as a key to the consideration on the international plane of that theory and practice of reformist Socialism whose operation in Britain has been discussed in the preceding article. For the policy and actions of the British Labour leadership, which Page Arnot analyses, are but the specific national form of an international phenomenon. The aim of these pages is to outline the basic character of international social-democracy as revealed in the twenty years that have passed between the two great wars of modern imperialist society.

It is not proposed here to recall in detail how the development of capitalism into its stage of monopoly, of imperialism, with the growing tension of its internal and external contradictions leading to the first imperialist world war (1914-18), involved the collapse of the old Second International. The essential thing for us at this stage is to remember how opportunism and departure from revolutionary principle had so corroded the Socialist International that in August, 1914, all its leading sections abandoned their internationalism and substituted the cry "Workers of all countries, cut each other's throats in defence of your Fatherland" for Marx's "Workers of all countries, unite." Upon the old International there reposed the clear obligation laid down and accepted at its congresses in Basle and Stuttgart that "if, nevertheless, war breaks out it is their duty to work for its speedy termination and to strive with all their might to utilise the economic and political crisis produced by the war to rouse the political consciousness of the masses of the people and thereby hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule." The betrayal of that pledge sounded the death knell of the Second International, rendering inevitable a split and the subsequent new grouping of the forces of consistent revolutionary Socialism, under the leadership of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party in the Communist International.

The general crisis of world capitalism engendered by the war of 1914, the Russian revolution and the collapse of Central and Eastern Europe in 1918-19 revealed very clearly that the "Socialism" of the majority of the old Socialist International meant this, and only this—to assist mortally stricken capitalist society to gain a new lease of life at the expense of the working class. This meant combating any development towards Socialism, that is to say the achievement of working-class power, in their own countries and using every weapon, from slander to armed attack, upon the country where the working

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class had assumed power and was in a position to proceed to the construction of a Socialist society.

If we take the three main periods of development since 1918, we shall see how Social Democracy has been consistent, internationally, in its collaboration with the ruling class of its own countries ("assisting the expiring bourgeoisie"), in its hostility to the Socialist Soviet Union, in its persistent refusal to participate in any united front of the working class against the menace of Fascism and War.

The Post-War Revolutionary Period

In the immediate post-war revolutionary period Germany was the key problem; and the story of the responsibility of the Majority Social Democratic leaders for the defeat of the German revolution is well known. We have the famous admission of Kautsky himself that the German workers and soldiers had power in their hands and that the Social Democratic leaders proceeded to hand power back to the Junkers and the bourgeoisie. This, as we know, involved that ruthless slaughter of thousands upon thousands of German working men with which the names of such Social Democratic leaders as Noske and Scheidemann will be forever associated in infamy. The present generation may not know how the name "Majority Social Democrat" stank throughout the world Labour movement in those days. The attempt to revive the old International, which was begun by the Berne conference in 1919, was too much for the stomachs of many who were far from being consistent revolutionaries; and the resuscitated corpse was no more than an uneasy association of the German and British right wing, its principal protagonist in this country being none other than Ramsay MacDonald. A general view was expressed by Mr. E. Shinwell, M.P., at the Scarborough Conference of the Labour Party in 1920, when he said "the Second International had participated in the crimes of capitalism ever since the Armistice. It had outraged Labour ideals and was merely an International of words and no value to this or any other country. It could not exist without the British Labour movement."

Abandonment of the working-class struggle against capitalism, and complete adjustment to the policy of their own ruling class, was the platform of the revived Second International and its successor, the Labour and Socialist International—formed at the Hamburg Congress of 1923 by the absorption of the phrasemongers of the centrist Two-and-a-Half International after they had performed their function of deflecting for a space the trend to Communism. The Geneva Congress in 1920 had described, in familiar terms, the International's aim of "socialisation" as a "gradual process" with compensation for the capitalists and had asserted that Parliamentary democracy must be the political system of socialism, with Parliament representing "the community as a whole." Nothing new, of course; but how this worked out in practice was seen in the direct alliance of Social Democracy with the regime in many of the smaller countries where White Terror had succeeded in overthrowing revolutionary governments. In Hungary, for example, the Social Democratic Party concluded a written agreement with Premier Bethlen in which it was laid down that "the Social Democratic Party will consider the general interests of the nation as of equal importance to the interests of the working class," that they "will carry on an active propaganda on behalf of Hungary . . . and for this purpose will co-operate with the Hungarian Foreign Ministry," and that in their newspaper *Nepszava* they will "adopt an impartial attitude and loyally express in this paper collaboration with bourgeois society." When subsequently the terms of this agreement became

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known and the scandal was such that even the Second International had to appoint a Commission of Enquiry (which, under Kautsky, duly whitewashed the Hungarian Social Democrats), the point was made by the Hungarian semi-official *Neues Pester Journal* that the agreement " does not contain anything which every Socialist Party of the world—if we disregard the Third International—would not have recognised, or at least realised by its practical attitude."

This line worked out most significantly in regard to the Versailles Treaty, the problems of reparations, and so on. While the Communist International immediately (on May 13th, 1919) denounced Versailles as " a brigand peace," which threatened to crush the German working class between the double yoke of its own rulers and the imperialists of the Entente, who were shown to be " in fact trying to impose their hegemony over all the nations of Europe," the Second International made no serious opposition at all. It could not, because it could not seriously oppose the victorious imperialists, particularly those of Britain and America, upon whose intervention depended the possibility of the reconstruction of capitalism in Germany. So their policy in the matter of the Peace treaties and reparations was " far behind that of intelligent West European Liberals," as a Communist International delegation said in 1922. At the Hamburg Congress the resolution on this matter was a fumbling piece of patchwork which was only distinguished from the Reparations policy of the Baldwin government in Britain in some secondary details. Here was no stand against the Treaty as such; only a humble plea for some degree of revision. Here was was no stand against Reparations; only begging that they should be adjusted to Germany's capacity to pay. And because there was a conflict in this matter between British imperialism and French, between Baldwin and Poincaré, so the French Social Democrats stood up at Hamburg to defend *their* bourgeoisie against their comrades. Léon Blum protested that the Versailles Treaty was not as oppressive as the Treaty of Vienna in 1815 or the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713; and, with the thunder of the Ruhr occupation over Europe, he defended French militarism (" old and glorious traditions ") and French chauvinism (which was, he said, a mistaken way of conceiving French " national pride ").

So spoke the leaders of the L.S.I. when Germany, crashing through inflation and economic ruin, stood on the eve of revolution; when the Workers' Government was established in Saxony and Hitler led his putsch in Munich. It was the Communist International alone which, that August, set forth the issues of the struggle and urged the need for immediate international unity to help the German workers repel Fascism, to organise full solidarity with them in their fight against their own capitalists and the Anglo-French imperialists, to defend the German revolution against foreign intervention and thus to further the fight for peace. This call for united action was dispatched to the L.S.I. It evoked no response. Instead, the whole force of international Social Democracy was swung behind the Dawes Plan, that notorious scheme of Wall Street and the City to save derelict German economy for capitalism by applying the healing balm of Anglo-American capital investment, turning Germany into a semi-colony and flinging new burdens upon the already horribly overburdened German working class.

Support For Russian Counter-Revolution

Here we may turn to consider the anti-Soviet policy of the L.S.I., as evidenced at this stage. The principal role here was played by those same leaders of German Social Democracy who had shown themselves the most willing tools of reaction in their own country. It was they who patronised,

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and subsidised, the Menshevik émigrés—the tribe of Dan and Abramovitch, those political bankrupts who had degenerated into open counter-revolutionaries and were regularly trotted forth at international gatherings to spit venom against the growing power of the Workers' Republic. These miserable creatures were invariably responsible for drafting Congress resolutions on the U.S.S.R. and engaging in general anti-Soviet hack work under L.S.I. auspices. In this way the Hamburg Congress—where resolutions of protest about Georgia were trotted out, though there was never a resolution of sympathy with the oppressed peoples of Egypt or India, then very much in the news—was made a very sinister demonstration against the Russian revolution.

Those who may imagine that denunciation of the Soviet regime by "Socialists" is something new should look back at the early efforts of the L.S.I. Thus in 1925 they published (in German) a work by Abramovitch and Company entitled "The Terror Against the Socialist Parties in Russia and Georgia." As a vicious attack without limit on the Soviet regime this performance may be commended as the father of all the lies that are repeddled in our own day by renegades and adventurers of all sorts. In the same year the L.S.I. report indicated that the work of the Russian Social Democrats included illegal activity in the U.S.S.R., where they had a secret printing press. This background of violent hostility to, and secret conspiracy against, the Soviet regime explained the vehemence of the assault that was always launched upon any demonstration that the U.S.S.R. was a workers' state, any plea for unity between the Soviet Labour movement and the movements in other countries. The principal example of this was the colossal barrage of lies and ill-will that was directed by the whole of Continental Social Democracy and its press against the British T.U.C. General Council in 1925. That was because the General Council's delegation to Moscow had returned to proclaim that "in Russia the working class is the ruling class" and further urged the need for international trade union unity, including the Russians. To the L.S.I. this was indeed anathema, and every method of propaganda and intrigue was used to discredit the British General Council and, through the Social Democratic control of the International Federation of Trade Unions, to dish their campaign for unity.

"Succumbing to Prosperity"

Perhaps even more revealing of the gulf that separated this "Socialist" International from Socialism was its line during the second post-war period, that of temporary capitalist stabilisation. It could be said of the L.S.I. leadership generally, as Professor Erich Roll has written specifically of the German Social Democrats, that they "succumbed to the apparent prosperity of the years 1924-29. They accepted the growth of monopoly as a step forward in the direction of Socialism. They developed the theory of organised capitalism as a substitute for their previous analysis of the economic system." Social Democratic delegations journeyed across the Atlantic to return and proclaim that Ford had supplanted Marx, that the American "high wages" policy (!) was the guiding star for the working class. This blind and baseless belief in the permanence of capitalist prosperity contrasted throughout with the sober analysis of the Communist International, which noted in its Programme (adopted at the Sixth World Congress in 1928) that "the stabilisation achieved by the repression of the working class and the systematic depression of its standard of life can only be a partial, transient and decaying stabilisation"; and which added at its 10th Plenum (July, 1929) that, despite Social Democratic prophecies, stabilisation was more and more undermined, and leading inevitably to new imperialist wars, to great class conflicts, to an upward swing

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of the revolutionary movement, and to new anti-imperialist revolutions in colonial countries. Who can now doubt which view was the right one?

What a contrast, too, on the big questions of *Empire;* the Communist International associated itself fully with the League Against Imperialism, established in 1927 as the most representative association of colonial peoples ever assembled; the L.S.I. not only turned all its fire against the League, but at its Brussels Congress in 1928—where there was no colonial representation—adumbrated a colonial policy so imperialist, so denying the principle of self-determination that the few, and moderate, colonial guests present were driven to raise an uproar. And as for the threat of *War* that same L.S.I. Congress did no more than rubber-stamp the policy of the Anglo-French League of Nations, the policy of Locarno and the Kellogg Pact (the French delegates taking the opportunity to add fuel to the Nazi flames by urging that the unconditional evacuation of the Rhineland was " not immediately practicable "). Yet while Social Democracy was thus whitewashing the war plans of the imperialists, capitalism's " historical fate drives it once again with tremendous elemental force into the vortex of tremendous catastrophes, the deadly breath of which will scorch the whole world " (C.I., Sixth Congress Manifesto). The L.S.I. and its parties deceived the workers with the myth that 1914-18 was the " last " war. Lenin had written in November, 1914, that " this war, if there does not follow a series of successful revolutions, will soon be followed by other war," and the Communist International proclaimed in 1929 that

> " The furious struggle for markets, for sources of raw material, for the export of capital and spheres of investment is inevitably leading to war among the great imperialist powers for the expansion of economic territory at each other's expense, to war for the re-distribution of the world. . . . By rejecting the proposal of the U.S.S.R. for real universal disarmament the League of Nations exposed itself as an instrument in the preparation of war. . . . The rapid increase of armaments in the imperialist countries and the establishment of new military and political alliances (England-France, England-Japan, France-Poland, &c.), are further evidence of the approaching new imperialist war—a war more gigantic, more destructive than the war of 1914-18." (*10th Plenum E.C.C.I.*)

To which type of analysis the L.S.I. could only reply by attacking the Communists " for directing the thought and hopes of the workers towards new wars," an observation as empty and stupid as its intention was slanderous.

World Crisis, Fascism and War

The onset of world crisis in 1929-30, prophesied by the Communists, filled blind-eyed Social-Democracy with astonishment and horror; and this opening of the third post-war period (or direct pre-war period) found these singular " Socialists " shouting loud and clear that their main purpose was —as before—to restore capitalism. Said the German Social Democrats at their Leipzig Congress (1931)—" We must be the physicians of ailing capitalism." Said the late Emile Vandervelde, chairman of the L.S.I., " the capitalist system is cracking in all its parts. It can only be saved by serious and urgent measures. We are at the eleventh hour. Take care that the proletariat, like Samson, does not bring crashing down the columns of the temple " (May, 1932). In Germany the situation was steadily deteriorating, both in an economic and a political sense; the Reichstag elections of 1930 had shown a vast and sinister accretion of Fascist strength. What did the L.S.I. propose? Its Congress at Vienna in 1931 gave the answer—a plea for " generous international credit action " to prevent German economic

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collapse (i.e., going round with the hat, as in 1924, to foreign imperialism to help German capitalism out of a jam); there was not a word of the prime necessity of united working-class action against Fascism; on the contrary, the Fascists and Communists were falsely bracketed together as those who equally recommended the "scrapping by violence" of the Versailles Treaty.

Germany in those opening crisis years was the final test of the policy of international Social Democracy. The powerful German section of the L.S.I. proved themselves only too deserving of the title "Social-Fascists" (as the Communists called them), since they "restrain the workers from revolutionary action against the capitalist offensive and growing Fascism, play the part of a screen behind which the Fascists are able to organise their forces, and build the road for the Fascist dictatorship" (C.I., 12th Plenum, 1932) The fatal policy of collaboration with capitalism, of fusion with the State machine, of ossification of the unions; the identification of the Social-Democratic leaders with the most reactionary Governments of post-war Germany (Brüning, Papen) on the plea that they were a "lesser evil" to Hitler; all this compromised them hopelessly in the eyes of the masses, and reduced a vast Labour movement to impotence. No fewer than four urgent calls from the German Communists for united action were summarily rejected or ignored. The Hitler coup was accepted without a fight, and the Social Democratic leaders actually sought accommodation with the Nazi regime—voting for it in the Reichstag—while their trade union colleagues expressed their "willingness to co-operate in the work of the Hitlerist State" (*The Times*). The shock throughout the world Labour movement was such that even Paul Faure had to write "Fascism is installed in Germany. By forgetting Socialism, by forgetting the class struggle, our comrades permitted this to happen."

Between 1933 and September 1939 an age stretches; but here we can dispose of it summarily. The disappearance of German Social Democracy meant that the L.S.I. now had only two major parties left, those of Britain and France; and the policy of the L.S.I. became more and more a reflection of the policies of the ruling groups in those two countries, especially (because of its dominant role) of Britain. The Communist International stressed that the policy of British imperialism, in supporting German rearmament and "aiming to turn the spearhead of German armaments from the West to the East and to direct Germany's aggressiveness against the Soviet Union," was "one of the factors accelerating the outbreak of world imperialist war" (7th Congress, 1935). But the L.S.I. remained passive, unmoved by the C.I. call for a united people's front to fight for peace and against the instigators of war.

When the Spanish Republic was fighting for its life against Fascist aggression the L.S.I. was full of sympathy; but it shuffled round the desperate appeal of its own Spanish section, urging it to meet the Communist International to concert a united campaign for Spain; when the P.O.U.M. gangsters and traitors were belatedly brought to trial it despatched a minatory telegram to the Spanish Government, in effect intervening on behalf of the P.O.U.M.; and its two leading parties, as is well-known, were the archprotagonists of "non-intervention." Towards Czechoslovakia and Munich the L.S.I. attitude can only be described as Chamberlainite: thus its secretariat report for 1938 wrote literally—"through the Munich agreement Hitler was forced provisionally to content himself with a partial success . . . but he still worked towards the completion of his original plan" and in March 1939, "openly violated the Munich agreement." Language precisely paralleled by Mr. Chamberlain's apologias. And finally, recording the

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liquidation of its Czech Party the report concluded that "the L.S.I. can only adopt a waiting attitude."

That is an apt thought for a conclusion. The " Socialists " who have scuttled Socialism " adopt a waiting attitude "—waiting in the bourgeois antechamber until they can get a chance to rush into open union with the most reactionary, most jingo, most Fascist-tending forces. As, in the crisis of the second imperialist world war, they have done by their union with Reynaud-Daladier-Mandel-Marin-Ybarnegaray in France, with Churchill-Chamberlain-Halifax-Lloyd-Duff Cooper in Britain. Offering the working class a British or French version of none other than "National Socialism," plus an unequalled anti-Soviet incitement as the Finnish war showed; but the working class needs " peace, bread and freedom," as the Communist International's May Day manifesto put it, needs " a popular front of the working people, established from below by the masses " to achieve those aims. It is evident that such a fighting front can only be forged by relentless struggle against the International of Socialist Betrayal.

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The Colonial Question and the War

BY CLEMENS DUTT

ALL THE WAR propaganda assumes that the "British Commonwealth of Nations" is a single democratic entity. The *Times* editorially assures us that "freedom, combined with order, is the life-blood of the Empire." The facts are otherwise. All talk of a war for democracy and liberty, for the freedom of small nations, is contradicted by the fact that British capitalism is the biggest oppressor of subject nations in the world.

In the British Empire, a small handful of white rulers dominate and exploit some 400 millions of subject colonial peoples. In India alone, more than 350 millions of people have been dragged into the war against their will. As the resolution of the Indian National Congress, the most representative organ of Indian public opinion, declared at Ramgarh last March:

> The Congress condemns the declaration by the British Government of India as a belligerent country, without any reference to the people of India, and the exploitation of the Indian's resources in this war, as an affront to them, which no self-respecting and freedom-loving people can accept or tolerate.

To pretend that "we do not own the Empire" is a violation of economic and political facts. Lenin wrote in 1915:

> Between 1876 and 1914, the six "great" nations grabbed 25 million square kilometres, i.e., a territory two and a half times the size of Europe. The six nations hold enslaved more than a half billion (523,000,000) of colonial people. . . . Everybody knows that the colonies were conquered by fire and sword, that the colonial populations are treated in a barbarous fashion, that they are exploited in a thousand ways. (*Socialism and War.*)

These facts are conveniently forgotten or shamelessly denied by the war propagandists. But they form the essence of the colonial question. The colonial question cannot be ignored by the working class in this country for it is the central question for British capitalism. The colonies form the chief object of rivalry between the imperialist powers, the chief cause of war between the powers and the great reserve force for the international proletarian revolution for the ending of imperialism.

The Colonies and the War

The British colonial question has passed through four stages. In the first stage, for the greater part of the last century, British capitalism enjoyed a special monopoly position, owing to the fact that it was at once capitalism in Britain and a system of colonial exploitation.

Using the examples of Ireland and India, Marx showed the effect on the British working-class movement and the vital need for the British workers to demand the freedom of these countries as an essential condition of their own emancipation ("no people oppressing other peoples can itself be free.")

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The second stage came with the imperialist epoch, when the position of British capitalism became the general one, and all "great nations" began to depend more and more on the super-profits from colonial exploitation. This period coincided with the degeneration of the social-democratic movement, the rejection of Marx's position by the Second International and the adoption of the idea of a "progressive" imperialist policy, *i.e.*, a policy of alliance with capitalism which benefited only a small corrupted stratum of labour "aristocracy" and necessarily proved a defeat for the working-class movement as a whole.

The third stage is that of the general crisis of capitalism dating from the time when the imperialist conflict over colonies gave rise to the first world war, and marked by colonial oppression reaching an extreme form.

The real war aims of the powers were concealed behind high-sounding moral phrases, but this hypocrisy was unmasked by the revelations of the secret treaties, the robbing of the German colonies, the attempt to plunder Soviet Russia, and the whole character of the Versailles Peace Treaty. It became clear that Lenin was right when he declared:

> The real essence of the present war is the struggle between England, France and Germany for the division of colonies and for the plunder of the competing countries, and the attempt on the part of tsarism and the ruling classes of Russia to seize Persia, Mongolia, Turkey in Asia, Constantinople, Galicia, etc. (*Selected Works*, Vol. V, p. 132.)

The Second World War

The first world war did not end in the downfall of imperialism and the solution of the colonial question, except for the sixth part of the world's surface occupied by the Soviet Union.

Hence the struggle of the financial groups for plunder and exploiting possibilities became more acute, and led to a new war for the re-division of the world. The working class has to undergo the horror of a second world war as a penalty for its failure to end the system which produces such wars.

The British Empire, as the biggest system of colonial oppression in the world, has been a basic force in the drive towards war.

It is suggested by the apologists for British Imperialism that the latter, having emerged from the last war with the addition of two million square miles of territory, was thereby "satisfied" and had become pacific. But the same argument was put forward with as little basis on previous occasions, e.g., after the Boer War. It fails to see that the conflict between rival imperialisms based on colonial exploitation is never-ending, that with the unequal development of capitalism the conflict is only resolvable by war, and that the drive to expansion is always going forward and has unlimited possibilities in a re-division of the world.

Already this war has shown that all previous possessions or dependencies are being thrown into the melting pot, that countries that have been nominally independent for centuries can be annexed or "protected", and that old-established colonies such as those of the West Indies or East Indies become prizes to be coveted as the struggle extends.

The New Stage of the Colonial Question

With the second world war, therefore, a new stage of the British colonial question is reached.

In this stage, the general crisis of capitalism becomes ever more acute. New enormous burdens are imposed on the colonial peoples. Colonial exploitation is intensified for war purposes. The subject peoples are made to contribute

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" gifts " for the prosecution of the war. New taxes are imposed, the price level goes up and up, staggering war debts accumulate, colonial labour conditions become even worse than before, labour battalions are recruited and " native " forces drafted for service overseas.

At the same time, the colonial regime of political repression is operated with greater ferocity than ever. The introduction of the Defence Ordinance in India, the arrest of thousands of trade union, working class and national leaders, is typical.

But this expresses precisely the fact that under conditions of imperialist war, the basic issue of the colonial question, the antagonism between imperialist finance-capital at the centre and the millions of exploited toilers in the colonies, reaches an extreme point. In spite of censorship, in spite of all attempts to hide the truth of the developments in the colonial empire, isolated facts such as the political strikes and growing militancy of the national movement in India, the massacre of Negro miners in Northern Rhodesia, the movement in the British West Indies, etc., all testify to the new and higher stage of the struggle of the colonial peoples against imperial oppression and the imperialist war.

British Labour and the Colonial Question

The experience of the last world war, which is being repeated now with differences of setting and at a higher level, makes it certain that the colonial question will become more and more critical as the war develops. The policy of the labour movement on this question becomes a touchstone of working-class policy as a whole.

The policy of the labour leadership in entering the war coalition and identifying itself with the war aims of British imperialism is above all the logical consequence of its previous policy in the colonial question. Whatever semblance of class struggle it may have been forced to adopt on home issues, there was no doubt of its essential unity with imperialism for the maintenance of the Empire.

For the settlement of the inter-imperialist conflict, two alternative policies, or both in combination, were put forward, viz: surrender of colonies to Hitler fascism as part of " appeasement," or international administration of selected colonies under a system of " mandates." Both involve treating colonies as objects of barter and exploitation, both involve subordination to the policy regarded as desirable at the time by British Imperialism.

When Bevin, at the Southport Labour Conference last year, spoke in appropriately commercial terms of " bringing in Germany and Italy on the ground floor " in the exploitation of the colonial peoples, he was voicing the Chamberlain " appeasement " line in typically crude terms. But the demand for extension of the mandate system, which was the favourite penacea of even such " left " elements as C. Roden Buxton (the Labour Party policy is " the universalisation of the mandate system," he declared in the *Daily Herald* May 4, 1939), H. N. Brailsford and Sir Stafford Cripps, is also a cover for a commercial deal, and an attempt to solve the colonial question by sharing out the right to rob and oppress, which leaves imperialism exactly where it was.

All such proposals assume that imperialism is a particular policy which can be reversed, and that this constitutes the solution of the colonial question. In more hypocritical language, the *Daily Herald,* as in its leading article of July 1, 1939, even went so far as to recommend international control because it meant " to renounce the old-fashioned, selfish type of imperialism." This altruistic renunciation presumably began when the idea of " mandates " was first invented to mask the annexation of the former German colonies.

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The War Policy of the Labour Party

The full flower of this type of argument is seen in the attitude now adopted by the Labour Party leadership. Truth is the first casualty of war, and propaganda for war is notoriously reckless and shameless. Hence, when the extended mandate system is put forward as one of the six points of the war aims programme of the Labour Party, it is now described with cool effrontery as "the abandonment of imperialism." This goes one better than the last war, when the Labour Party's manifesto on the "War Aims of the British People," issued in 1918, said only "we seek neither to exalt ourselves nor to enlarge our Empire."

The support of empire and colonial exploitation under the pretence of "abandoning" it is a piece of hypocrisy just as transparent as the proposal to support Anglo-French imperialism under the guise of federal union, "an international authority superior to the individual states" as the Labour Party programme has it.

The exponents of federal union are too naive. They openly proclaim that the nucleus of the federation is to be found in the Franco-British Supreme War Council. The Labour Party leadership scarcely troubles to veil its support for British capitalism's plan of an Anglo-French Empire, dominating Europe and forming the centre of an imperialist power group directing colonial exploitation all over the world.

The official leadership of British labour, by entering the war coalition with British capitalism, makes itself responsible for keeping the colonial peoples in subjection and intensifying their exploitation.

The Epoch of War and Revolutions

But the present stage has essential differences from that of 1914-1918. It is not only that in this new stage the conditions of the millions of workers and peasants in the colonies have become even more intolerable and the contradiction between the imperial centre and the oppressed colonies more pronounced, reflecting itself in the greater intensity of the colonial peoples' struggle for independence.

The vital difference from 1914 is that already one-sixth of the world has emancipated itself from imperialism, that there exists the Socialist Soviet Union which has shown in practice that a real solution of the colonial question is possible. The Soviet Union has proved itself the champion of the oppressed peoples. Its very existence has shaken the foundations of imperialism throughout the world and destroyed its prestige.

The surging wave of the colonial people's movement for emancipation from imperialism, which grew up during the last war, was correctly seen by Lenin as part and parcel of the international working-class struggle, in spite of the fact that the colonial working class played a subordinate role within it. In the present stage, the working class in the colonies is more and more taking a leading role in the fight against imperialism. In spite of all persecution, the vanguard of the colonial working class has developed its political organisation, the Communist Party, and has equipped itself with the indispensable weapon of Marxist-Leninist theory. The tremendous significance of this is already seen in the development of the national struggles in India and China.

The present epoch is once more entering a critical phase. The logical results of capitalist development are working themselves out. It is a period of the break-up of empire and the ending of imperialist exploitation.

In this period the opportunist policy of the official labour movement can only bring ruin and misery for the workers. "Opportunism," says Lenin,

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" means sacrificing to the temporary interests of an insignificant minority of the workers the fundamental interests of the masses, or, in other words, an alliance of part of the workers with the bourgeoisie against the mass of the proletariat " (*War and the Second International*, p. 39).

The entry of the Labour Party into the reactionary capitalist government means precisely an alliance with imperialist exploitation against the working class and against the colonial peoples.

The working class as a whole has nothing to gain by this policy. Its policy must be that of union with its own allies, alliance with the exploited colonial peoples. This alliance means practical co-operation with the colonial peoples in a joint fight in support of national independence and for the complete ending of imperialism. This is the only path of advance which can lead to working-class victory.

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"Left" Intellectuals and the War

BY E. M. WINTERTON

"THE LANDLORD IS a counter-revolutionary force. The big capitalist is another. The bourgeois intellectual and Liberal civil servant is their cowardly menial, hiding his servility to the counter-revolution behind 'democratic' hypocrisy." Lenin wrote these words in 1907, at the blackest point of reaction after the crushing of the first Russian revolution. He knew his bourgeois intellectuals; and judging from the behaviour of the "left" intellectuals of this country since the war began, he knew those of Great Britain as well.

When one begins to analyse the different groups into which the "Socialist" intellectuals have fallen since August, 1939, one is irresistibly reminded of another description Lenin gave of them, the same year, as "self-satisfied Narcissi, enamoured of the dung-heaps which surround them." The jingo arguments so lavishly smeared over the pages of publications like the weekly *Tribune* and *New Statesman*, the monthly *Left News* or the *Political Quarterly*, fill one with the same kind of nausea one would feel in clearing away a dung-heap with one's bare hands.

But the dirty job is there, because "Socialist" jingoism is part of the dirt which imperialism deposits in the working-class house, with particular success, through the medium of the "Left" intellectuals; and if the Communists will not roll up their sleeves and set the example, the house will never get clean.

Britain, like all advanced capitalist countries but more so, being the oldest, is particularly rich in the caste of middle class intellectuals. The British Empire, with its huge apparatus of trade, industry, banking, repression and bamboozling of the people, needs a large number of skilled administrators of that apparatus. It trains them up in its universities and colleges, taking them sometimes from the ranks of the working class, but more often from the middle and upper classes, developing in them a sense of superiority to the mass of the people, allowing them to sharpen their little wits from time to time upon the more hideous excrescences of the capitalist dung-heap, but never alienating them from it completely, so far as the majority are concerned. There are thousands of honourable exceptions already in the ranks of the Communist Party and near it, we are proud to say. But the vast majority answer to Lenin's description with startling fidelity.

One such group is composed of those who were already loyal followers of Transport House and violent enemies of revolution before the war. These openly revel in the worst passions of jingoism. A typical example is the article by Mr. A. L. Rowse in the *Political Quarterly* for January-March, 1940, entitled: "What is wrong with the Germans?" Mr. Rowse answers this question in a fashion that might have been borrowed straight from the Nazi textbooks. It is "hideous Teutonism," "a solid core of Teutonic barbarism unaffected by the influences of civilisation"; there is something in the German people which likes kicking a man when he is down; they have no critical standards: they suffer from a "dominant neurosis verging upon madness,"

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and must be either locked up or "rooted out." And so on, over fourteen nauseating pages.

Does not Lenin's definition aptly describe the "intellectual" who speaks so glibly of rooting out (another, Mr. Dalton, called it "wringing necks")—and has not the courage or the honesty to admit that it was his own masters, the British bourgeoisie, who first helped all that was bestial in Germany to crush the revolution in 1919, and then helped Hitler into power in 1933-34, maintaining him right up to the war?

A similar "intellectual" apologist for direct counter-revolution is Mr. R. H. S. Crossman, who tells us in the *New Statesman* (May 11), about the "Communist danger" in France, the "popular indignation" which would have swept the French Government away had it not "hit the Communists hard," the French metal workers who were "all anti-Communist" and so on. Mr. Crossman, of course, is only one of a whole school of "Socialist" intellectuals, dug in around the *Daily Herald* and less obvious organs of British Government propaganda, who lie about the French Communists as readily as they slander the German people by identifying them with Hitler. For them, of course, it does not count that the French Government did not dare to give the Communist deputies an open trial, such as even the unspeakable Goering gave Dimitrov; or that the Paris trade unions, 1,200,000 strong, had elected an executive committee with a Communist majority, which the police had to break up before Mr. Crossman's friends could lay their hands on the union machine. But what signify facts to the menial of counter-revolution?

Then we have the more "independent" group, partly Radical and partly Socialist in its inspiration, which is perhaps best typified by Mr. Kingsley Martin of the *New Statesman*, Mr. Brailsford of *Reynolds* and the group which edits the *Tribune*. The specific peculiarity of this section of the "Left" intellectuals is that upon occasion they will frankly confess the shortcomings of British imperialism, but can always be relied upon at the crucial moment to advise surrender and shameful passivity when the working class, by independent and bold action, could prevent some monstrous crime.

Thus, in the first months of the war, when the working class still had a chance to speak loudly and effectively, Mr. Brailsford week by week wrote in almost apocalyptic language of the great possibilities which this most wonderful of all wars was unfolding before his dazzled gaze—the transference of the colonies to some future international body, the "completion" of the liberation of India, the promotion of a German revolution. Only in an undertone, in a few awkward asides, Mr. Brailsford from time to time mumbled something about one little change being necessary—to drive out the men who had betrayed Spain and Czechoslovakia, effected the Munich pact, driven away the U.S.S.R., and so forth. But meanwhile, everyone was to rally around the war which these same men were organising, for the sake of the golden visions which poured from Mr. Brailsford's facile pen. And it is only in May, 1940, when the war has at last been launched in a big way, when India (he writes) has been driven to the edge of revolt, when Defence Regulations of all kinds have been securely clamped on the body of the British people, that Mr. Brailsford discovers, with a start, that "out of their graves, to lead the Men of Munich, rise the Men of Versailles": and that the illusion that we were fighting for a reconciled and co-operative Europe (Mr. Brailsford's own words) has "perished."

Or again, there is the *New Statesman*—that sage and mature adviser which comes prattling every Friday of "Marxism," and of how revolutionaries should comport themselves: telling Stalin where he has abandoned Socialism,

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and reporting to Lenin how badly the British Communists are fulfilling his teachings. Yet was it not that same *New Statesman* which in 1937, when Japan attacked China with the connivance of British imperialism, told the Chinese people that it was no use fighting and they had better surrender? Is it not that same journal which in 1938 earned the proud distinction of being the first to advocate the surrender of the Sudeten districts to Hitler, so that the *Times* later on could invoke its authority for this particular method of murdering the Czechoslovak Republic? Is it not that same Mr. Kingsley Martin who in 1939, when Mr. Chamberlain's Government was sabotaging the Moscow negotiations on the sly, while letting the public believe that negotiations were progressing, failed on any single occasion to expose the deadly menace to peace which Chamberlain was thereby creating? Is it not his journal, finally, which has proclaimed the war thus brought about —the war in which ungrateful German imperialism turned on the British Empire, instead of satisfying itself at the expense of the Soviet Union as British finance-capital intended—to be a war for democracy?

Indeed, it is. Mr. Martin's *New Statesman* is that very running-dog of British Imperialism, as the Chinese say in their expressive way, echoing Lenin's sentiments without knowing it.

It is hardly surprising, then, that the same journal should be ignoring the immense movement of revolt against the war among the *class-conscious, politically active section* of the British working class, voiced by innumerable resolutions at trades councils and trade union branches, and by substantial minority votes at conferences like the Scottish T.U.C. and the Co-operative Congress. Tenants' movements, strikes, the revolt against high prices and inadequate allowances, disgust with the black-out and with class taxation—these, which move *the wider masses* of the British people, leave the *New Statesman* majestically undisturbed, like any self-satisfied Narcissus. And when the ruling class—the bankers, landlords, manufacturers, millionaire newspaper owners—naturally itch to get their fingers round the throat of the Communist Party: who so willing to surrender, nay, who so eager with its cowardly denunciations to Sir John Anderson, but the *New Statesman*—with its "yes, officer, yes, Sir John, that's the man who takes his orders from Stalin, Sir John, that's the slave of Marx, Lenin and the Kremlin; arrest him, not me"?

This brings us to a third group—that of the intellectuals who, by the chance of individual volatility or the calculations of the publishing trade, have for a time been associated with the revolutionary movement, and now do their best to obliterate any trace of it. Faced with the extraordinary lack of direct renegades from the Communist Party (did not one of them, Mr. Toynbee, pathetically bemoan in the *New Statesman* the vacuum which such renegades feel around them?) this group heroically strive to make good the deficiency.

They slander the German Communists. Mr. Gollancz has devoted columns of the publications open to his writings, and pages of a special pamphlet he has published, to this subject. Ignoring the long statement of the German Communists' position by Florin, last November, the joint declaration of the German, Austrian and Czechoslovak Communist Parties published in December, the joint manifesto of the German, French and British Communists likewise published in this country—all of which make perfectly clear that German Communists fight Hitler as British Communists fight Chamberlain and Churchill, and French Communists Reynaud and Daladier—Mr. Gollancz seizes on one article by another German leader, Ulbricht, which replies to a German Social-Democrat who was representing the British and French Governments as fighting for the ideals of liberty. Ulbricht naturally

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exposes this shameful swindle—which no less a person than Mr. Brailsford admitted to be a swindle in *Reynolds News* on May 5—and consequently his re-statement of the German Communists' attitude to Hitler occupies less space than his exposure of the aims of the British and German capitalists. The distortions which Mr. Gollancz thereupon makes would need to be seen to be believed. For example, a reference to the conditions which British Imperialism maintains in India, Africa and Egypt is presented as though it referred to Great Britain. Ulbricht's reference to British Imperialism as "the most reactionary force in the world" is quoted without any mention of the fact that he justified this by its support of Hitler from the very beginning. His appeal to fight against the Hitler terror is the occasion for Mr. Gollancz to gloat over the absence of any appeal to overthrow Hitler himself—when the article was published in Sweden, where the strict rules of neutrality would have meant the instant suppression of the publication in which the article appeared, had such a call been made.

The renegades likewise slander the gallant underground workers of the French Communist Party, repeating the lying capitalist insinuations fabricated by skilled police provocateurs, to the effect that the French Communists advocate sabotage.

Above all, they slander the British Communists. Mr. John Strachey in the *New Statesman,* and Mr. Gollancz in the special pamphlet already mentioned, make what purports to be an analysis of the *Daily Worker's* references to the situation in Norway, on April 8, 9 and 10, intended to show that the British Communists were "withholding the truth" and apologising for Hitler. Space is too brief to follow up in detail the trickery with which Mr. Strachey and Mr. Gollancz contrive to conceal from their readers the fact that the *Daily Worker* warned its readers, before the German invasion of Scandinavia, that Allied mine-laying must lead to an extension of the war; that, when the extension took place, both sides were denounced as "two imperialist robber camps"; and that throughout the *Daily Worker* explained to its readers the necessity of not taking refuge in a banal statement of common imperialist responsibility, but of selecting for attack that imperialism which is closest to hand.

But this is just where the shoe pinches. Anything that does not proclaim German imperialism the enemy—which does not, therefore, link up in one dishonourable chain with Transport House, the Tory Party and the Bank of England—is for Mr. Strachey and Mr. Gollancz an "apology for German imperialism." It was against such people that Karl Liebknecht spoke, at the Berlin court-martial in 1916:

> "If the German Socialists were to combat the British Government and the British Socialists the German Government, it would be a farce or something worse. He who does not attack the enemy imperialism, represented by those who stand opposed to him face to face, but attacks those from whom he is far away, and who are not within the range of his shots: and that even with the help and approbation of his own Government (i.e., those representatives of imperialism who alone are directly opposed to him): is no Socialist but a miserable hack of the ruling class. Such a policy is not class war but its opposite—incitement to war."

Of course, the hacks and the menials find a "democratic" excuse. Hitler threatens Western civilisation and its tradition, says Mr. Gollancz, and we are the inheritors and trustees of that tradition, which is one of "respect for the personality of the individual." But were we not told the same thing about the Kaiser in 1914? Did not Anglo-French imperialism sacrifice civilisation and the individual in China, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Spain, and only bethink itself of its "tradition" when Hitler refused to round

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off its plans by attacking the U.S.S.R.? And is it respect for the personality of the individual which the Allies protect in India, Africa, Indo-China? Of course, the Editor of the *New Statesman*, whose columns are freely at the disposal of Messrs. Gollancz and Strachey, has his own ideas about Western civilisation. On April 20 he pilloried the sickening Nazi treatment of a woman who had an affair with a Polish prisoner. It was beneath his notice, of course, that in Rhodesia a white woman was lately sentenced to six months' imprisonment, with due insult from the Bench, for the "crime" of sleeping with a Negro.

Hitler's victory would mean the end of all our hopes, whines Mr. Gollancz. The ending of British imperialism would not be the victory of Hitler; on the contrary. Without Chamberlain and his class, there would be no Hitler. Every victory that Hitler has won has come to him with the help of British Imperialism. Every crime of Nazi Imperialism has been at one and the same time that of British Imperialism—which bears an even greater responsibility, therefore, precisely because it cherished, built up and encouraged the new German Empire. Accusations of helping Hitler because one fights British Imperialism have just as much basis as the accusations of the Russian Gollanczes, in 1917, that Lenin was helping the Kaiser because he denounced the imperialism of the Russian capitalist class.

They will hurt the British Communists no more than they hurt the Russian Bolsheviks. Of course the deserters imagine that the Communist Party must wither and die if they cease to confer upon it the inestimable benefit of their company and approval, and still more if the police arrest its speakers, seize its publications and proscribe its activities. This has always been a delusion of wobbly middle-class intellectuals, for whom in their heart of hearts there is no authority more awful than that of their "own" bourgeoisie, no force more powerful than the big boots and blue uniforms of the police. "I, and it seems almost everybody else in the country, can have nothing to do with the Communists," announces Mr. Strachey. To such people the immense masses of politically conscious workers in the factories, the trade unions, the local Labour Parties and co-operative societies, who are already having much to do with the Communists, simply don't count. To such people the fact that seven hundred or a thousand votes in a by-election, cast in war-time for a clear anti-imperialist programme, bear the same relation to ten thousand votes cast for a turgid mass of hypocritical phrases about fighting Hitlerism or a war for a new world, that gold bears to lead, is also of no consequence. So much the worse for them.

The Communist Party is in every way far stronger to-day than it was at the outbreak of war. Its politics have a far greater appeal to masses of thinking British workers. At the very moment these lines are written, word comes of scores of new members for its factory groups, new branches where none existed before, in the teeth of the cleverly conducted campaign, stretching from the *Sunday Dispatch* to Mr. Gollancz, for identifying the Communist Party with the Fifth Column and thus shielding the real friends of Fascism in Britain. The membership of the Communist Party and the sales of the *Daily Worker* have both substantially grown since last September. The circulation of the LABOUR MONTHLY has grown from 7,000 to over 16,000. Lenin's "Selected Works" sold in 598 copies in the last quarter of 1938, and 6,782 copies in the last quarter of 1939; in the same quarters, the sales of the sixpenny "Little Lenin Library" rose from 2,598 to 11,079. The latest of this series, published in the New Year—Lenin's "War and the Workers"—sold 10,000 copies itself in one month, and a second 10,000 have been printed. Not a Communist pamphlet is published to-day which

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does not pay for itself, by tens and scores of thousands of sold copies. Above all, the immense increase in working-class financial support for the *Daily Worker* in 1940 remains to-day, just as 30 years ago with the Bolshevik *Pravda*, proof of the deep affection and confidence which the best elements of the British people feel for the Party. The Labour Party, with its huge individual membership of over 400,000, collected little over £9,000 in donations in 1939. During the same period, the *Daily Worker* Fighting Fund *alone* received from its readers over £15,700. Among the best and most devoted of the Communist Party's supporters are thousands of intellectuals in every walk of life, civil and military.

While the Communist Party has resources like these to draw upon—and they are as limitless as the British people—it can leave Mr. Kingsley Martin, Mr. Strachey and Mr. Gollancz to their dungheaps.

ECONOMICS *and* WAR

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Immediate Programme or Social-Democratic Utopia?

A Programme for Progress by John Strachey (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.)

A DOUBLE MISFORTUNE has afflicted this book of John Strachey. It appears to have been written to discuss what was the best policy to be pursued by Popular Front or similar progressive governments in time of peace—a task by no means superfluous at the time when the book was planned, for everyone will remember the role which financial sabotage played in bringing down the Popular Front government in France and in hindering various progressive measures undertaken by the Roosevelt administration. But the book appears in time of war, when all the pre-requisites for a Popular Front on the old model have disappeared and when the immediate policy put forward in the book is wildly irrelevant. And so the book is introduced with the lame excuse that perhaps, after the war and all the social upheavals associated with it are over, we will find ourselves once again in a position when a Government based on the Labour and Progressive forces is the only alternative government to that of the blackest possible reaction and therefore this book might have considerable value. We can only say that this point of view appears to treat the tremendous crisis of capitalism represented by the war as a mere interlude between two periods of peaceful and slow development. This of course is how the Labour leaders are treating it. They are advising their followers to support the Coalition Government but keep their organisations intact and at the end of the war to take up the electoral struggle where they left it. Strachey, in permitting the book to be published, is suggesting that the Left forces might do well to keep the old Popular Front policy in mind and a discussion of the economic and financial programme of such a Popular Front might be useful when the old policy is resumed after the war. Surely a strange under-estimation of what the war involves.

I know the reluctance of authors to destroy the product of their weary hours of thought and research, or to put that product in cold storage, but it would have been better for the reputation of Strachey if he had frankly recognised that he had "missed the bus" and withheld this book from publication.

For we are in the midst of an Imperialist war, in which the forces which might have co-operated together in time of peace have been split asunder by the war and when the duty of Socialists is to utilise the crisis created by the war to bring about the overthrow of the capitalist system. All immediate programmes should be a means of mobilising the masses and directing them to this end. But "if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound who then shall prepare himself for the battle," and if we write books suggesting that after all we may have little or no success in mobilising the people for the overthrow of capitalism and that perhaps we should discuss what programme a Labour and Progressive government might adopt after the war, then we are obviously demoralising, and not uniting, the working-class forces. That it lends itself to this outlook is the first misfortune of Strachey's book.

But it is not its greatest misfortune. Its greatest misfortune is that Strachey in arguing for his progressive programme has gone far beyond putting up a case for an immediate policy which enables the working class and its progressive allies to win certain concessions, to develop their organisations and to prepare for the decisive struggle for power. His immediate programme rapidly transforms itself into a panacea, unemployment is conquered, the trade cycle is ironed out, the consumption of the people is steadily raised, while main-

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taining the profitability of industry for the industrial capitalists. In short, Strachey (in spite of a qualification inserted here and there throughout the book) has come precious near to inventing one of those Social-Democratic Utopias like the I.L.P. Living Wage Plan of 1926-29 or the de Man plan of the 1930's. There was this much to be said for the I.L.P. Utopia. It was conceived in the midst of a period of relative capitalist stabilisation, when the American "economic miracle" was hypnotising the Social-Democratic elements in many lands. That was, to say the least, less to be condemned than the Utopia of a crisis-less capitalism circulated at a time when the contradictions of that system have found expression in the second World War.

But has Strachey really outlined such a Utopia? Let us see. On page 17 we are told that the supreme failure of capitalism is its inability to abolish unemployment, on page 7 we are told that the "programme for progress" presupposes a state of affairs in which the progressive forces take office without being in a position to "attempt the total and immediate abolition of capitalism and the capitalist state," on page 103 we are told that on the basis of such a programme we can restore and maintain full employment. On page 111 it is once again emphasised that a progressive government can "re-employ idle factors, or prevent factors at present in employment from falling idle," i.e., abolish the trade cycle within the framework of the capitalist state. On page 159 it is again emphasised that if a progressive government lacks "the determination and ability to regain or sustain reasonably full employment that government and the parties composing it are lost." It is clear that we have here outlined not a policy for combating unemployment within the capitalist system while directing the people towards the struggle for power, but the policy of abolishing the trade cycle under a progressive government, which is administering the capitalist state. On page 40 this progressive government breaks "the grip of what is usually called finance capital upon the economic system" and substitutes "some form of public, non-profit making, non-capitalist financial mechanism"—again while administering the capitalist state and without having overthrown the capitalist class.

When we ask how these marvels are to be performed we are presented with a typical programme of under-consumptionist and expansionist reforms of (*a*) a state bank financing "public and mixed investment by the creation of credit," (*b*) the lowering of the rate of interest, (*c*) the redistribution of income from the rich to the poor by means of taxation which is not mainly, or at any rate not entirely, reckoned as a part of the costs of production (i.e., death duties), (*d*) the payment of greatly increased pensions, allowances and other social services, so long as general unemployment exists, out of newly created money, rather than out of taxation, (*e*) a stricter control over the balance of foreign payments.

Now we are not arguing the value of any of these measures as part of a programme for combating unemployment in the pre-war situation. What we are arguing against is the quite unwarranted assumption that they constitute a programme for eliminating the trade cycle and for achieving and maintaining full employment in the midst of the capitalist system.

In the whole 348 pages of the book there is no attempt to demonstrate how this can be done on the basis of this programme. True we have an interesting chapter on the New Deal which certainly did improve employment as compared with the depths of the 1933 depression but fell 7,000,000 short of achieving "full employment." We have a chapter on Nazi Germany which has achieved full employment (in the short run) on the basis of mass conscription, the stimulation of armament production, *and a progressively lowering standard of life.* But there is no proof in all this that we can achieve full employment and a rising standard of life by means of Strachey's programme within the framework of the capitalist state.

The basic cause of economic crisis within the capitalist system is the contradiction between social production and individual appropriation. This expresses itself in the powerful expansion drive of capitalism, coming up against the limited consuming power of society—a limited consuming power springing from the very nature of capitalist accumulation itself.

Can this cycle be eliminated by schemes for the "promotion of public or mixed investment plus redistributory taxation when employment is at its peak"? We believe this is answered by Strachey himself when on page 79 he quotes Mr. Douglas Jay's demonstration that in spite of the redistributory taxation of the last generation, the proportion of income falling to the various classes has not substantially changed. A more complete analysis of why this is so would perhaps throw a penetrating light on the ability of redistributory taxation to remove the

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contradiction between the tendency to unlimited production and the reduced consuming power of society.

True, the position of the workers would have been worse if they had not wrung concessions with regard to taxation and social services from the capitalist class. They must keep on doing so while preparing for the struggle for power. But such concessions do not change the basic forces of capitalist society, and therefore cannot eliminate crises.

Mr. Kingsley Martin has hailed Strachey as a Daniel come to judgment, the prophet of a new Socialism that is at once evolutionary and "by gad sir, British." Of course it would be too much to condemn Strachey or anyone else on account of the vagaries of Mr. Kingsley Martin, but on this occasion we are afraid that Strachey has earned the dubious praise bestowed upon him. Without the seizure of power by the workers he breaks "the grip of what is usually called finance capital upon the economic system" (page 40), he brings into being "what may perhaps be described as a transitional, modified controlled economy" (page 7 of preface), he tells us that "capitalism cannot now hope to function . . . without transforming its banking system into a national service, without allowing a substantial part of the incomes of the rich to be transferred to the poor, without paying out newly created money to the old or the young; without promoting the vigorous development of public and semi-public enterprises of various sorts. *By doing such things as these Socialists will be 'making capitalism work' but when they have done them long enough it will be no longer capitalism that is working. Socialists may feel perfect confidence that the inner logic of any progressive programme must lead to Socialism"* (page 161, italics ours). This society that "will be no longer capitalism" will, Strachey avers, "be unaggressive and un-imperialist to the extent that it manages both to keep the wheels of production turning to the full and simultaneously to raise the consuming power of the population" (page 295). We can see the justification for Mr. Kingsley Martin's praise. Strachey is going back to "the inevitability of gradualness," to the step by step transformation of capitalism into Socialism (with Keynes instead of Sidney Webb as the prophet of this stale, rehashed reformism).

Strachey does not improve his position when he seeks to quote Lenin in justification. The quotation from Lenin is as follows: "The Socialist revolution is by no means a single battle; on the contrary it is an epoch of a whole series of battles around all problems of economic and democratic reforms, which can be completed only by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie."

So far from this quotation backing Strachey's policy it argues dead against it. Lenin is saying that the fundamental problems of present-day society cannot be solved unless the battles "around all problems of economic and democratic reforms are completed by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie," in short by the Social Revolution, Strachey is arguing that it is possible to abolish unemployment, to "make capitalism work," to so transform capitalism that "it will be no longer capitalism" and to make society "unaggressive and un-imperialist"—without expropriating the bourgeoisie. There is nothing remotely like Strachey's thesis to be found in the works of Lenin or for that matter in the works of any other Marxist.

Surely Strachey can see that to put out this rehashed theory of evolutionary Socialism, based on the gradual transformation of capitalism—without the seizure of power by the workers—at a time when capitalism has exploded into the second World War is to perpetuate a grotesque absurdity. Mr. Kingsley Martin cannot see the absurdity because the war to his mind is due to failures of individual politicians to do this or that and not to the fundamental character of the capitalist system. Therefore, Mr. Martin can have in his mind at one and the same time the spectacle of the capitalist class being prepared to waste millions of lives rather than lose a single foot of its territory, with the vision of the same capitalist class gradually surrendering their privileges to the advance of a Socialist movement that is at once practical, evolutionary, and (hip, hip, hooray) British. But that was not, up till lately, the attitude of Strachey. Is it his attitude now? Is his recent collaboration with Victor Gollancz in denouncing the Communist attitude to war a sign of a fundamental abandonment of the positions of Revolutionary Marxism? This book gives good ground for suspecting that it is.

J. R. CAMPBELL.

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Where Mr. Gollancz Has Gone

Where are you Going? By Victor Gollancz. (Gollancz. 4d.).

MR. GOLLANCZ HAS written a fourpenny pamphlet entitled *Where are you Going*? Whatever else it has done, it has succeeded in making clear where Mr. Gollancz has gone.

What does this pamphlet aim to achieve? It is addressed to Communists with the aim of persuading them to leave the Communist Party.

What is the central point in the long-winded arguments that Gollancz brings forward, as justifying his appeal to Communists? That for a number of years prior to the present war breaking out the Communist Party has been leading the fight against fascist aggression, and that now the Communist Party has not only changed its policy, but that in effect it has taken up a position where it is pro-Nazi.

That is the essence of the Gollancz case, and needless to say, there is not an atom of justification in this gross misrepresentation of Communist Party policy. At times even Gollancz's conscience seems to trouble him, that in his misrepresentation he may be playing the game of the Churchill Government in its attacks on Communism. At any rate, we may be sure that, whatever repressive acts may be directed against the Communist Party in the future, at least Gollancz will be allowed to continue attacking Communism.

The Communist Party led the fight against all forms of fascist aggression and for the building up of a Peace Front in which Britain, France and the Soviet Union would have been the principal supports. A Peace Front open to all nations to join if they wished, which, if it had been achieved, could have prevented all future acts of aggression from whatever quarter they may have come. During the whole course of this campaign we specifically warned the people that, if this policy was not adopted, a terrible imperialist war would result, and we made perfectly clear what our attitude in those circumstances would be.

The proof of this can easily be found. The 7th Congress of the Communist International was held in 1935. In the Report on The Preparations of the Imperialists for a New World War, it was expressly pointed out that

> "Should a new imperialist world war break out, the Communists will strive to lead the opponents of war"

and would base their opposition on the thesis advanced by Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg and adopted by the Stuttgart Congress of the pre-war Second International in 1907:

> "If nevertheless war breaks out, it is their duty to work for its speedy termination and to strive with all their might to utilise the economic and political crisis produced by the war to rouse the political consciousness of the masses of the people and thereby hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule."

At the 14th Congress of the Communist Party in May 1937 the Editor of the LABOUR MONTHLY, R. P. Dutt, in his speech on The Fight for Peace, stated

> "Our policy is one on which all elements which want peace can unite. We do not pretend to guarantee the victory of peace against war, we say that depends on the struggle, on the forces of the masses. If war comes none the less, if the imperialists and the fascist warmongers let war loose, then our task is set forth in the resolution. We declare, just as did the fighters in Spain when Franco attacked Madrid, that Madrid would be the grave of international Fascism; we declare that if in spite of our efforts and our struggle, in spite of the wish of the overwhelming majority of the people in the world, the warmongers and fascists and imperialists let loose new world war on the whole of humanity, then that war which they let loose, whatever the suffering, whatever the destruction, will be the grave of their doomed, dying and damned régime."

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And I seem to remember Mr. Zilliacus, friend of Mr. Gollancz, tabling a long resolution at the Southport Labour Party Conference in 1939, the essence of which was that Labour could not support any imperialist war. In his speech at that Conference Mr. Zilliacus stated:

> "I believe our difficulty, when it comes to foreign affairs and defence, is that we have not got the same confidence in our own power and in our own rightness and in our fitness to run the whole show without the Tories as we have when it comes to home affairs, because the Tories have always had the monopoly of foreign affairs and defence. I believe the Tories are defending class interests that are not the interests of the common people."

In his pamphlet Mr. Gollancz makes great play with the character of his anti-fascist speeches at meetings of the Left Book Club. Not a few noted that these speeches consisted in dealing with the conditions and effects of fascism, without ever making any serious attempt to show what the basis of fascism is. This was not accidental, because if the fundamental character of fascism had been understood by Mr. Gollancz, his speeches would have had a direct relation to the aims which the ruling class of Britain had also set themselves to achieve.

In this so-called war against fascism even such an astute observer as Mr. Gollancz will surely not have failed to notice that not one of the leading spokesmen of the three political parties in Britain now running the present war ever mentions that it is a war against fascism; it was described at first as a war against Hitlerism, it has now become, in the words of the Tory die hards who lead the Churchill Government, a war against the German people.

Readers of the pamphlet are asked "to forget the atmosphere in which we are living." What in reality Mr. Gollancz wants them to forget is the fundamental change that has taken place in the international situation since the establishment of a Peace Front with the Soviet Union as one of its principal supports was rejected by the Chamberlain Government, which in fact indicated that the British Government had chosen war instead of peace, and that after the conclusion of the Soviet-German Pact it was then confronted with the Nazi war machine which it had helped to create and which now became the most dangerous menace to the vested interests of British Imperialism.

The attempt is made to gild the gingerbread of this anti-Communist pamphlet, by Gollancz declaring:

> "I yield to no one in my desire that the achievement of the Soviet Union shall not be jeopardised."

But it is actions that count in the most critical moment of the class struggle, and not desires.

A lot of time is spent and much extra cost in the lavish use of italics to prove how awful Hitler is. We all know that; we fought for years on end to draw the attention of the people to this fact. We do not believe now, that the British Ruling Class that built up Hitler will ever become the instrument through which fascism will be destroyed, and we note in passing that up to now both in France and in Britain our Ruling Class have not been backward in introducing many of the methods which Hitler used to attack the rights and liberties of the common people.

Mr. Gollancz is pained to note in the speeches and articles of German Communist writers an insufficient appeal to the German people to rise up against Hitler. Perhaps Mr. Gollancz is too busy writing pamphlets to read *World News and Views* and the *Daily Worker*—apart from the bits he tears out of their context to misrepresent. If he did, he might discover what is being done, and done very effectively, in Germany in this direction. We express this opinion now, recognising all that is happening, that the German working class under the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany will be amongst the first to overthrow their own ruling class and carry through the revolution—a revolution which if they achieved it tomorrow, would have to meet the repressive attacks of British and French Imperialism in the same way that the Russian Revolution had to fight against the united attacks of the German, British and French Imperialists in 1917-1920.

Of course Mr. Gollancz is terribly anxious to do the right thing and think the right thing. He is not satisfied with his own infallibility—strange though that may seem to some of us—but, he tells us, he went to "a brilliant young friend" for guidance. He did not, apparently, get much help. He would get more if he created a precedent in his habits, and went to the working class, the working women of Clacton who laid flowers on the graves of the German airmen whose machine crashed; the working-class soldiers who during the last war fraternised on Christmas Day with the German soldiers in the opposite trenches;

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who in the Army of Occupation in Germany after the war shared their food and formed unbreakable friendships with the starving people amongst whom they were billeted; who to-day in the cinema sit unmoved by the fervent appeals to conquer or die, but burst into spontaneous applause at the casually thrown in shots of ordinary Norwegian, Belgian and Dutch working people in an instinctive effort to show their solidarity with them as distinct from their warmakers.

In common with others of his kidney, Mr. Gollancz hesitates to say outright that what Lenin taught about imperialist war is incorrect. Just as Bernstein and Kautsky did not openly attack Marx, but only "revised" him, so we are told that Lenin has unfortunately become out of date because he could not foresee the rise of fascism in Germany. This review is not the place to give lengthy quotations from Lenin on the war, but one singularly apposite one, describing the people who made precisely the same justification for their treachery on the grounds of the necessity to fight "Kaiserism" and "Prussian militarism," will perhaps be forgiven:

> "These people" (wrote Lenin) "castrate Marxism; they purge it, by means of obvious sophisms, of its revolutionary living soul. They recognise in Marxism *everything except* revolutionary means of struggle, except the advocacy of, and the preparation for such struggle and the education of the masses in this direction."

We see plainly why Gollancz rejects revolutionary means of struggle when we read on page 15 an indignant denial that Great Britain is the most reactionary force in the world. "Does a single one of you," he declares, "believe that British democracy, British capitalism, British imperialism, is 'more reactionary' than Hitler-fascism?" Presumably Mr. Gollancz's pamphlet is not intended for widespread circulation in India, or he would not have asked this question so confidently. Surely Mr. Gollancz has heard of Kenya, Nigeria, the North West Frontier of India, the West Indies, Egypt, Ireland, and the depths to which British Imperialism is now going in India to repress the rising mass movement for Indian Independence? The British Empire has been won not by love and friendship, but by naked brute force, which in its day seemed as terrible and dastardly to defenceless native peoples as Hitler's mechanised warfare seems to other peoples in Europe to-day.

Mr. Gollancz must not think he is playing an original role in attempting to bring back the straying feet of the Marxists to the correct path. Long before Lenin found it necessary to devote so much time and care to the task of unmasking these self-constituted teachers, the German Jewish revolutionary, Lassalle, described Philistines of the Gollancz type in these words:

> "An empty hose, full of fear and hope for the mercy of God."

I cannot resist quoting once again from Mr. Zilliacus' speech at Southport, when the bogey of "what if Hitler comes here" is being used to disarm the workers in their fight against their real class enemies in Britain:

> ". . . The first is that it is too dangerous in the present international situation, because it might encourage Hitler and Mussolini. Of course it is dangerous. We have to choose between two dangers. But the perfect answer to that object was made, if I may again quote him, by Mr. Marchbank in his recent speech when he said Labour must not allow the Government to use Hitler and Mussolini as bogey men to frighten us into losing our liberties, and while the threat from foreign Fascism is real we must also realise that our liberties are threatened by the friends of Fascism who live within our frontiers. . . ."

The united efforts of all the most reactionary forces in Britain, even with the assistance of Mr. Gollancz, will fail to destroy the Communist Party. That Party is indestructible and incorruptible. The Communist Parties, the Communist International, the Soviet Union, were born out of the fight for peace against the last imperialist war. For the Communist Party, the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, is not something to subscribe to in peace time, and put in cold storage in war time. It is not something in war time that has to be fought for by the workers of all belligerent countries except Britain.

The workers of Germany, Britain, France, Norway, Holland, and Belgium will through all the mud, blood and reaction yet find the way to achieve what their Russian comrades did in 1917. It will not be easy. There is a hard path to tread; some will fall by the wayside. But the revolutionary core will stand firm, unafraid either of a Churchill, Hitler or Reynaud, *for they know* where they are going, and nothing in the world will ever deflect them from their path or prevent the final victory over Imperialism and Fascism alike.

HARRY POLLITT.

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A Disease of Poverty

Tuberculosis and Social Conditions in England by P. D'Arcy Hart and G. Payling Wright (National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis. 3s.).

In simple words, *half the population of wealthy England has not enough income to be able to give itself adequate nourishment, to satisfy the demands of health.* (*Two Systems*, Varga, p. 154.)

Everywhere workers indicated that they were being forced to work harder and harder. . . . (ibid, p. 156.)

They feel that they are now being forced to work at a speed beyond human endurance. (ibid, p. 157.)

POVERTY, MALNUTRITION, SPEED-UP—symptoms of capitalism in its decline. The workers need no proof of the effects of these evils, but it is refreshing to find a document produced in collaboration with the Ministry of Health which sets out accurately to evaluate the influence of such factors on the changing death-rate from a particular disease.

Increasingly it has been realised by bourgeois science that Tuberculosis is a disease of poverty. In a survey carried out by the Registrar-General some years ago it was found that the tuberculosis death-rate among unskilled workers was three to four times as high as that for the upper and middle classes. (See *Poverty and Tuberculosis* by T. Francis Jarman, M.D., Medicine To-day and To-morrow, June, 1939.) Infection by the tubercle bacillus and extension of the disease can be resisted. The resistance of the individual is dependent on a number of general factors. Enough good food, sunshine, graduated rest, are part of the recognised treatment. Such factors—and that of proximity to infectious individuals in overcrowded houses and tenements—are directly relevant to prevention. Food and housing are the factors that have been most studied in the past. The study under review deals with a specific part of this wider problem.

> The trend in mortality from respiratory tuberculosis in England and Wales and in the English county boroughs has been examined by sexes and age-groups.
>
> The mortality for most age-groups in England and Wales has declined steadily since 1870, except during the war period 1914-18.
>
> For young adults the mortality declined satisfactorily until the beginning of the present century, but a retardation set in about 1900-04 for young women and about 1912-14 for young men. This retardation has been particularly severe amongst young women, whose mortality in 1931-33 was scarcely lower than it had been in 1901-03. . . .
>
> (Summary to Ch. I, p. 9.)

Thus Messrs. Payling Wright and D'Arcy Hart summarise their problem. Their study analyses the possible connections between mortality statistics for young adult tuberculosis of the lungs and various social factors, in so far as statistical evidence for them is available. This approach is characterised by full realisation of the limitations of the methods used. Conclusions are presented with an accurate assessment of the probability factors involved. The authors appreciate the need for close collaboration between their method and the more usual clinical individualist approach to problems of disease. Their work illustrates the overlap that scientific medicine demands with sociology, economics and mathematics. The interest of the method and the modesty with which conclusions are submitted must not, however, interfere with our appreciation of the importance of the conclusions.

In spite of the advances of knowledge, and of the development of tuberculosis services, pulmonary tuberculosis in this country is almost as fatal in young people as it was at the beginning of the century. Why?

Three main factors are suggested in the final conclusion.

1. The special sensitiveness of young people to bad social conditions—to the effect of "combined environmental and biological causes"—to "the stress and strain of industrial occupation" during early adult life.
2. "Country-wide changes in general social and economic trends." More particularly "the check to the rise in the standard of living occurring about 1900 which was accompanied by a set-back in the improvement in general housing conditions, and the accentuated increase in the industrial employment of young women also taking place about that date."
3. Unsatisfactory local conditions of which "housing appears to be of special importance." ("General Conclusions," p. 129.)

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In other words—during peace time young boys and girls were dying from tuberculosis of the lungs on account of poverty, under-nourishment and bad housing. We can imagine what is likely to happen if this war is allowed to develop.

ALAN WADE.

Apologetic Mr. Keynes

Mr. Keynes Answered by Emile Burns (Lawrence and Wishart. 1s.).

"IN THE PREFACE to the second edition of *Capital,* Marx speaks of the decay of bourgeois political economy as a science after the capitalists had conquered power. He says:

> It was thenceforth no longer a question, whether this theorem or that was true, but whether it was useful to capital or harmful, expedient or inexpedient, politically dangerous or not. In place of disinterested enquirers there were hired prize-fighters; in the place of genuine scientific research, the bad conscience and the evil intent of apologetic.

Mr. Keynes has always been the hired prize-fighter of capital, though his gloves, as befitted the delicate character of his job, were of the finest kid. Now in the extreme crisis of British capitalism 'the bad conscience and evil intent' of his work come even more clearly to the surface."

That is how Emile Burns describes Mr. Keynes and characterises the much publicised Keynes plan in his recent booklet. And he proves his point. The book is a real addition to our Marxist literature. Every one of the specious arguments and misleading and dishonest assumptions advanced by Mr. Keynes are subjected to a cruel and biting analysis. He is exposed for what he is, a "hired prize-fighter" for the rich and powerful clique that are in control of affairs in Britain.

But Burns' book is more than a critique of the Keynes Plan. It is the Marxist reply to the millionaire industrialists and a chorus of capitalist economists and financial writers who for months past have been planning to impose the main burdens of the war on to the shoulders of the working class.

That is why this book is important, especially just now when the drive to impose fresh and heavier burdens on the workers will be intensified, not only by the declared enemies of the working class, their capitalist masters, but inside the ranks of the working class itself.

H.M.

A Classic Re-Issued

Foundations of Leninism by Joseph Stalin. (Lawrence and Wishart. 1s.).

"LENINISM IS MARXISM of the era of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular." Stalin thus gives the key to his theme in these famous lectures of 1924, which have so long been an invaluable text book: out of print for some time, their reappearance at this moment in a new translation is most timely.

Why the absolute supremacy, the *dictatorship* of the working class is central to the theory and practice of Leninism is here demonstrated; and it is shown how the peasant problem and the problem of oppressed nationalities relate to that central question. Strategy and tactics—"the science of leadership in the class struggle of the Proletariat"—are brilliantly discussed. The relationship between revolutionary tactics and the experience of the masses is outlined in passages which are especially topical.

Stalin's chapter on the nature of the Communist Party ("a new party, a militant party, a revolutionary party, one bold enough to lead the proletarians to the struggle for power, sufficiently experienced to find its bearings amidst the complex conditions of a revolutionary situation, and sufficiently flexible to steer clear of all submerged rocks in the path to its goal") deserves the closest study; but, indeed, this applies to the whole of this brochure, whose hundred-odd pages should be familiar to every militant.

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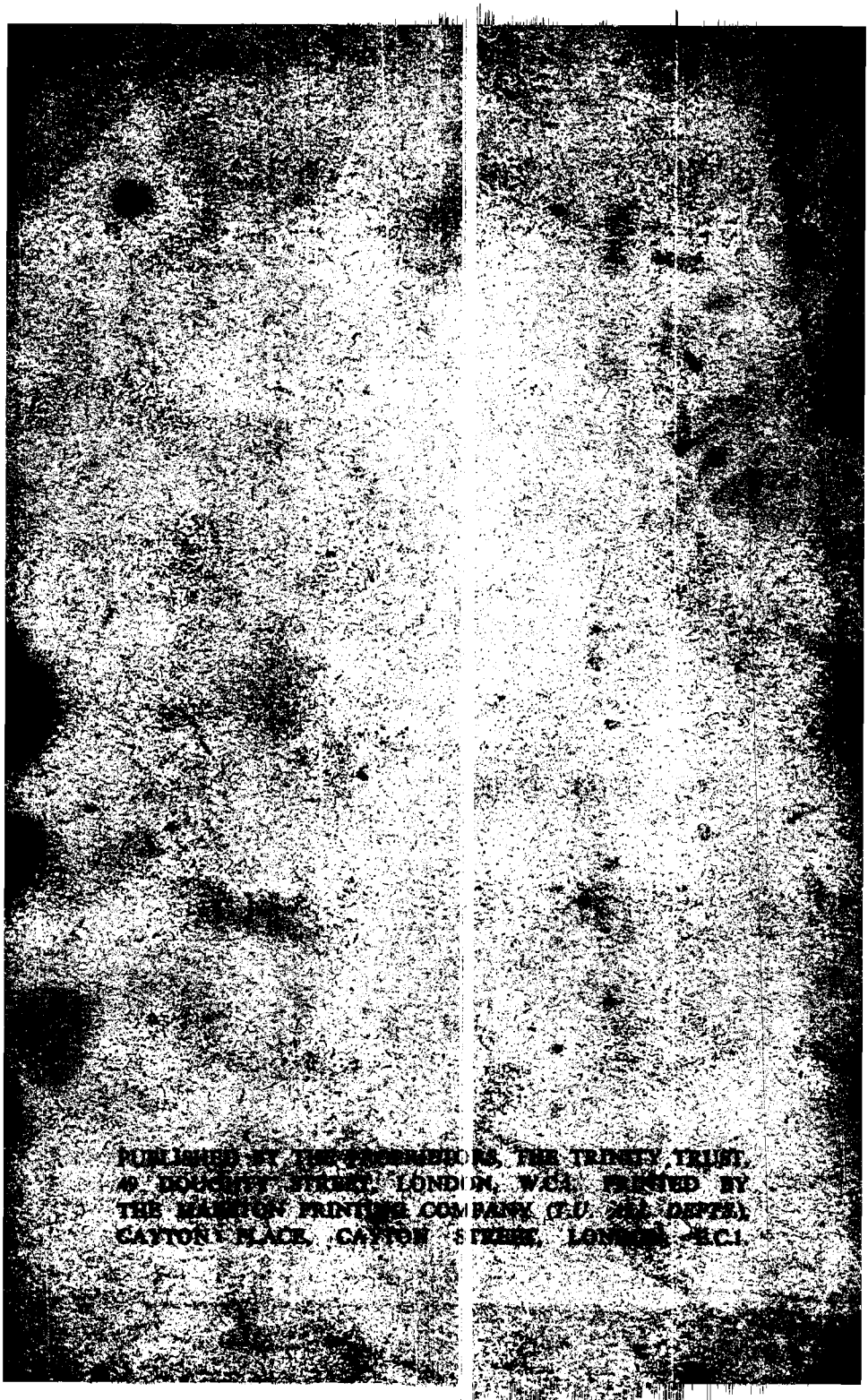

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